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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

HINDOSTAN,

WITH

SKETCHES

OF

ANGLO-INDIAN SOCIETY.

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Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster," "*Oriental Scenes*," &c.

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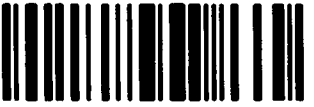

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SCENES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HINDOSTAN.

CHAPTER I.

ALLAHABAD.

ALLAHABAD holds a middle rank amongst European stations in the Mofussil, being many degrees in advance of the slenderly-garrisoned cantonments of the jungles, yet very inferior to the large depôts, such as Cawnpore, Meerut, &c.

Allahabad, or 'the abode of God,' acquired this name from the Moosulman conquerors of India, who have left memorials of their splendour in a fortress once unequalled in beauty, and now gaining in strength what it has lost in external appearance,—several tombs remarkable for the elegance of their structure, and a garden and serai belonging to one of the emperors. The city itself does not display those remains of magnificence which might have been expected in a place favoured by the pre-

sence of royalty, and so admirably adapted both for the commerce of its new possessors, and for the security of their dominions in the provinces of Hindostan. It now retains few vestiges of the Moghul conquest, save the appellation and the buildings before-mentioned, its Moosulmanee inhabitants being limited in numbers, and of little importance as regards their wealth, rank, or talent. The city is almost wholly given up to idolatry, and has ever been celebrated for the pilgrimage of pious Hindoos, attracted to a spot blessed by the junction of two sacred rivers. It stands upon the extreme point of the Dooab, the name given to the fertile district which divides the Ganges from the Jumna, and is therefore esteemed holy by all castes, who annually repair in crowds to bathe themselves in the united streams.

While infanticide, merely for the purpose of avoiding the expense of bringing up female children, was the open disgrace, and is still the secret practice, of many classes of Hindoos, the curse of sterility has ever been considered, both by rich and poor, as the greatest misfortune that can attend the married state. When prayers and gifts to brahmins have been unsuccessfully employed to obtain the desired blessing, the despairing supplicants not

unfrequently attempt to propitiate their blood-thirsty goddess, Doorga, by the promised sacrifice of their first-born. Should their desire be accomplished,—a benefit which is of course attributed to the direct interposition of a deity delighting in the waste of human life,—they consider themselves to be solemnly pledged to the performance of the vow, and the hallowed spot in which the Jumna throws itself into the Ganges, is very commonly chosen for the fulfilment of the awful duty. Though the crime of infanticide, upon any pretext whatever, is not permitted by the British Government, there is not much difficulty in eluding the laws in force against it, since the natives are possessed of so many facilities for accomplishing in private what they no longer dare to perform before the world. A small quantity of opium, administered in the first nourishment given to a new-born babe, will send it to its everlasting rest; and as no inquiry is instituted respecting the cause of death perpetrated without apparent violence, and where the probabilities are in favour of its having been occasioned by natural accidents, the murderers escape detection. It is not difficult, when the broad surface of the united rivers is covered with boats, to drop the intended victim into the stream, a catastrophe which may be attri-

buted to accident, and which the religious prejudices of the surrounding multitude would prevent from being brought to the notice of the public authorities; while the fatalism which renders Hindus apathetic, in the midst of danger to themselves or to others, is too great to induce them to make any attempt to rescue a drowning person from the grave. It is said that the brahmins, on the supposition that Doorga may relent, and willingly relinquish the offered sacrifice, station themselves in boats a little way down the stream, and pick up those children who have escaped the dangers of the first plunge; they are not, however, restored to their families, but retained by their protectors, and brought up in the performance of religious offices.

When the affection of the parents for their first-born has been too strong to allow them to devote so beloved an object to the consequences of a rash oath, the intended victim, when arrived at maturity, stung with remorse at the violation of a duty held so imperative, and attributing every family misfortune to the wrath of the justly-incensed Doorga, have voluntarily performed the sacrifice by plunging into the river, or precipitating themselves from some rugged height to a frightful abyss below.

In the Rajpoot states, the destruction of female

infants was, and it is to be feared still is, common in the highest families, for political reasons. The representations of the British residents, and their eloquent appeals to the better feelings of kind-hearted, though misguided men, have done much, especially in Guzerat, towards the abolition of this inhuman method of getting rid of a dilemma; but there is no law against it, and the tragedy of Kishen Koor, the most cold-blooded murder ever perpetrated by the hand of man, is still recent. The brother of the beautiful victim, slaughtered to secure a state measure, now sits upon the throne of Oodipore; he was innocent of the cruel deed, and there is reason to hope that so shocking a scene will never be acted publicly again.

In less exalted families, the money essential, on the part of the relatives of the bride, to furnish the wedding paraphernalia and to defray the expenses of the feasts, without which no wedding can be celebrated in India, is so difficult of attainment, that although there are plenty of suitors of the same class to be found, it is deemed better to avoid the weariful business of saving cowries and pice until they amount to rupees, by giving the *coup de grâce* to the impertinent intruder who has put the family to inconvenience by entering it in a female shape.

"Daughters to marry," is the excuse given by servants who, having high wages, appear ill-apparelled, and in ragged case: years of privation must be endured, in order that all their acquaintance may banquet at the period of the nuptials. This is the "one thing needful;" beauty, accomplishments, and amiable qualities may be dispensed with, but a *burra khana* (great dinner) there must be, and where it is not practicable to furnish forth the wedding-feast, parents, with admirable forethought, strangle their children, who would otherwise grow up to be married.

In former and more barbarous times, the junction of the Jumna and the Ganges was the scene of those fearful human sacrifices, which were not more savage than absurd, in a religion professing so much humanity towards the brute creation. A youth and a maiden, representing two of the favourite deities of the Hindoo Olympus, after having received divine honours from the crowd following their triumphal cars, were flung into the sacred waters, and supposed by the ignorant multitude, deluded by a clumsy device of priestcraft, to be borne upon the holy stream to their dwellings in the paradise of the blessed. Figures of clay are now substituted for the human performers in the

pageant, which, degenerating into a vulgar show, serves to amuse the rabble on the anniversary of a festival fast falling into contempt.

Another of these horrible spectacles used to be exhibited at the commemoration of the triumph of Ráma and his ally, Hunamān, attended by an army of monkeys, over the giant Ravana. The luckless beings selected to enact the principal characters, were at the end of the festival no longer visible to mortal eyes. The uninstructed imagined that they had been absorbed into the divine essence, and claimed by the deities whom they had represented: a process of which the officiating priests knew the secret. Poison was said to be mixed up with the sweetmeats presented at the termination of the feast, and the unhappy groupe, brought from a distance, and unseen except during the short period of their performances, were by many supposed to have been the deities themselves, descending to assist at the celebration of their *avatar*. The Moghuls have the credit of being the first opposers of these shocking rites; the Christian governors of the land have insisted upon their total abolition; and the example set in the Company's territories has been followed in the independent states, human sacrifices, excepting such as are voluntary, having become

rare in India. The slaughters of the temple at Jyepoor have ceased, and the most fanatic of the priesthood are fain to be content with the blood of goats upon the pavements, once purple with the currents which ran in the veins of their fellow men.

A tax has been levied by the Government upon the pilgrims resorting to Allahabad; this impost has had the effect of lessening the number of bathers, and of preventing in a great measure the immolations already spoken of: a method of opposing the hideous superstitions of Hindooism, in strict accordance with the mild policy pursued by a government, which would inevitably occasion the overthrow of its own authority by a more direct and coercive mode of rooting out idolatry from the land. The tax, in that brilliant era when the rupee-tree was seen to flourish, and the Indian soil was paved with pagodas and gold mohurs, was the perquisite of the governor of the fort, a citadel of the utmost importance when the country was in an unsettled state. In the present peaceable times, it has become a quiet and honourable asylum for a veteran who, passed the period for active service, has retired to end his days in the land of his adoption: many general officers preferring to spend the remnant of a long life, worn out in military duties,

in the country which has seen their toils, to a return home, where they will find themselves strangers, and must seek new occupations and new employments for the mind. The government of the fort at Allahabad is, therefore, an appointment much sought by invalided officers of rank; the command possesses many advantages, though the pecuniary emoluments have been most cruelly curtailed.

In these degenerate days, a rigorous inquiry has been instituted respecting every illegitimate method of increasing the pay and allowances, too often found to be insufficient for the purpose of accumulating the means of returning home, and many snug perquisites have been taken away, which, not enriching the state, makes its military servants "poor indeed." In every garrisoned place, cantonments are marked out, under the superintendence of the officers of the surveyor general's or quartermaster general's department, for the accommodation of the troops. Officers are permitted to build bungalows and to plant gardens upon this land, which become their own property, subject however to the pleasure of the Government, who, in removing buildings for the public service, give the owners a compensation. Natives are also allowed to construct residences for the use of officers or persons

connected with the garrison; fitting spots are selected for the huts of the sepoys, which are generally erected in the rear of the parade-ground, and close to small tenements of brick or stone, built for the security of the arms, and resembling gigantic sentry-boxes. The bazaar is close at hand, and from the tolls and dues collected in these markets, and the permission granted for the opening of toddy-shops, a snug revenue used to be derived by the commanding officer of a small station, or the brigade-major of a large garrison. There are besides, in extensive cantonments, waste lands, which the natives desire to bring into cultivation, and which may be farmed out at the discretion of persons in office, who were very willing to encourage agricultural speculations, when they could derive benefit from them. Whether they will be so ready to oblige the *ryuts* (farmers), now that they are compelled to account for every rupee that passes through their hands, remains to be proved. The two-and-twenty years' servitude required before a pension is granted to retiring officers, scarcely adequate to support them in decency, and insufficient to provide for their families, should be rendered cheerful by the hope that fortune may throw some snug appointment in their way, which may

reconcile them to their tedious exile, and remunerate them for the losses they have sustained through various casualties to which military men are liable, and for which, except when the destruction of property is occasioned by an enemy in the field, the Government refuse to make compensation.

Few officers pass through their military career without having received, directly or indirectly, a hint that they may benefit themselves considerably by the grant of a small favour. One has been offered a large sum of money to permit a rich native anxious to assume the gentleman, to sit in his presence with his shoes on. Had the request been acceded to, the person thus honoured would have attained a degree of consequence amongst his own people to which he was not entitled, and which was of sufficient importance to induce him to purchase it at a high price. Others, known to be upon good terms with the judge, have been solicited to procure decrees in their favour; and it would be always easy for intimate acquaintance, aware, from the circumstances of each case, how the decisions were likely to be made, to take upon themselves the credit of having advocated the cause of the successful party, who would be very ready to pay for a verdict supposed to be thus obtained. Officers

holding staff-appointments have numerous candidates outbidding each other for the subordinate offices, in which natives are always employed; an indignant rejection will not convince them that they have formed a wrong estimate of the British character; unabashed, they are ready to make a second trial at any convenient opportunity.

A curious *exposé* took place at a station in the Dooab, at the period that preparations were making for the visit of the Governor General, Lord William Bentinck, to the Upper Provinces. Eight hundred *claishees*, or tent-pitchers, were to be engaged to attend the camp, which was planned in a style of great magnificence. A native employed in the commissariat, in the course of his duty, was directed to find people for the purpose; his muster-roll was soon completed; but the visit of the Governor General being postponed until the ensuing year, there was no occasion for the services of the *claishees*. Upon their dismissal, there arose a terrible outcry; it appeared that eight hundred tent-pitchers, in their anxiety to secure eligible engagements in the train of the *Lord Saib*, had paid, according to their means, for the coveted posts. The worthy personage who had sold these appointments to the best bidders, refused to refund

the money; the case was brought before the magistrates; but as it appeared that he had fulfilled his part of the contract in putting their names upon his list, they could not have any redress.

The principal object of curiosity and attention at Allahabad is the fort, which is erected upon the point of land stretching into the waters of the Ganges and Jumna, whose broad currents are united beneath its walls. Though injured in its appearance by the alterations and additions necessary to transform an ancient Moghul castle into a place of strength, according to the modern art of fortification, it still retains somewhat of its oriental and feudal air; rising in majestic grandeur from the river, whence it may be espied at a very considerable distance. During the rainy season, the currents of the two streams are so rapid, that, with an unfavourable or adverse wind, it is almost impossible to drag up boats, ascending the Ganges, against the rush of these mighty torrents. Many hours are consumed in the struggle; a delay which, were it not for the toils of the trackers, would be amply compensated by the gratification afforded by a slow approach to a citadel of great interest, both as regards its striking aspect and the skill and science of its engineers. There are low posterns leading

to the glacis facing the river; but the principal entrance of the fort of Allahabad is landward, and is not to be paralleled in magnificence by any building intended for a similar purpose. A noble arched hall, in the gothic style, surmounted by a dome, and enriched with "arabesques of gold and flowers," appears beyond the ample portal, an entrance worthy of the finest citadel in the world. Fort William has nothing to equal it, nor is it inferior to that of the principal gate at Agra, preserved more for show than use, since Government has not considered it expedient to strengthen the walls and make them proof against a cannonade. The interior, containing ranges of buildings, not entirely divested of the beauty of their original architecture, affords, at least during two seasons of the year, some of the most delightful residences to be found in India. A suite of apartments intended for the use of the Governor, but which is sometimes occupied by an inferior officer, commands a splendid view of the Jumna, with its craggy heights and wild sandy shores.

From a balcony perched near the summit of a tower, on which the windows of one of the chambers open, a prospect of singular beauty is obtained. The spectator looks down upon a grove of mango-

trees, flanking a fine esplanade, and peopled with innumerable ring-necked parroquets, which, as the sun glances upon their vivid plumage, dart in and out of the branches like corruscations of emerald light. Above, upon pediment and pinnacle, other bright wanderers of the air erect their crests, and plume their wings, or take their upward flight into fields of gold. Along the thickly-wooded shores of the Allahabad bank, buildings of various degrees of interest are interspersed: on the small islands which rear their sandy platforms above the surface of the river, huge alligators bask; and the opposite shore of Bundelkhund, rising in towering cliffs, crowned with pagodas or the remnants of hill forts, forms a noble back-ground beautifully outlined against the clear blue sky. The interior of the citadel is finely planted; and here, as at Fort William in Calcutta, the confidence reposed by the numerous tribes of birds inhabiting the branches is not permitted to be violated. The slaughter of reptiles is alone allowed within this sanctuary for weak and harmless things; all other animals live in peace, sporting through their little day, secure from wanton aggression.

A state prisoner of considerable importance occupies a suite of apartments destined for the accom-

modation of captives of rank,—the usurping rajah of Bhurtpore, who will, in all probability, finish his career within the walls of the fortress of Allahabad. He is not inaccessible to British visitors: but strangers are not inclined to gratify mere curiosity by staring at the man who, trusting too securely to the supposed impregnability of the strongest native fortress in the East, threw down the gauntlet at a period in which the energies of the Government were directed against the Burmese. The fall of Bhurtpore has totally extinguished the hopes of a warlike race, who, though defeated in many battles, and checked in their victorious career against the Moslem power, vested in the weak emperor of Delhi, still cherished expectations of gaining an ascendancy in territories so often torn from their ancestors by the Persian and the Tartar. It is said that, after the fall of the citadel, those proud and lofty-minded natives, who, galled by defeat, looked insult and defiance upon their Christian rulers, quailed their heads, and became deferential to the conquerors of the Jauts, the most chivalrous warriors of modern India, and the only people of the central provinces who, after the Mahratta war, dared to offer opposition to the British arms.

The fortress of Allahabad is well calculated to keep the belligerent spirits of the upper country in awe; nothing, indeed, save acts of folly and ignorance on the part of new legislators, deeply versed in theories, and bent upon making experiments at any expense, could threaten the destruction of British power in the East; but a change of masters may effect a great deal, and the present generation may very possibly be enlightened upon the subject of mismanagement by the loss of Hindostan.

The cantonments of Allahabad are beautifully picturesque, having a greater diversity of hill and dale than is usually to be found upon the plains of India, and being finely wooded in every direction. The drives are numerous, and there is one leading along the walls of the cemetery, which derives a melancholy interest from the recollections of those who sleep within. India has not unjustly been entitled "Scotland's church-yard;" the Caledonian tenants of the tombs certainly outnumber those of the sister islands, and those of Allahabad have their full proportion of veterans and youths from the green hills and clear streams of North Britain. The gravestones and mausoleums, erected in Anglo-Indian burial-grounds, are peculiar to the country,

and are generally more heavy and ungraceful than the monuments of European churchyards. There are, however, some exceptions; and a broken column at Allahabad, over the resting-place of a Fitzclarence, forms a classic and appropriate memorial of a young man of great promise, cut down in the vigour of his youth. He has left behind him something better—a name linked with gracious deeds; and were the Earl of Munster to return to India as its governor-general, he would find that the courtesies which endeared him and his lamented brother to both native and European residents, have been remembered, and would add to the warmth of his reception.

The undulating surface of the country round Allahabad affords numerous advantageous sites for bungalows, many of which are erected in very excellent situations, commanding views of great beauty. The bungalows themselves are not remarkable for their size or elegance, although the judges belonging to the Sudder Mofussil Adawlut have their head-quarters at this station, and the residence of a considerable body of civilians usually occasions great improvements in the buildings, as they are less in the habit of renting houses than military men, and have larger funds and better

means for constructing and beautifying their mansions. The garrison is small, consisting of not more than two native regiments, one usually an invalided corps, and the artillerymen and engineers requisite for the duties of the fort. The station has never been remarkable for its festivities: yet its balls and parties sometimes attract visitors from the smaller and duller military posts at Chunar, Mirzapore, and Pertaubghur in Oude: the latter a melancholy place, the quarters of a single regiment, whose active spirits are glad to vary a monotonous routine by occasional trips to a gayer scene. There is no theatre at Allahabad, and the chief resource for the gentlemen appears to be a billiard-table, which is the resort of all the idlers of the station. A tolerably well-supported book-club furnishes the more studious with the floating literature of the day, light reading suitable to a warm climate, and to the many who seek for amusement only in the pages of a book.

The rocky character of the bed of the Jumna affords to geologists a field for their pursuits, which they would seek in vain in the muddy alluvial soil watered by the Ganges. Amidst pebbles of little value, interesting and curious specimens of cornelians, and stones even more precious, are occasionally

found. The opposite district of Bundelkhund is famous for diamonds, equalling in value and splendour those of the Golconda mines, and in some particular spots they are found in considerable quantities: all below a certain weight are the property of the persons who may chance to gather them; the larger sort belong to the Rajah of Punna, who is bound to give a certain price, in the event of his claiming the privilege of purchase. The native method of gathering diamonds, which is the least expensive, and perhaps, on that account, the best, is very simple. A few labourers clear a convenient space on a rocky surface, and when it is laid bare, they bring buckets of earth from the places supposed to be most thickly sown with the gems, and sifting it through their hands, easily find the diamonds, which, even in their rough state, are extremely luminous. The hire of the workmen comprizes the whole of the outlay, and diligent seekers frequently gather a rich harvest.

A British officer, desirous to set to work upon a large scale, constructed a steam-engine, and other scientific apparatus, at an expense of 30,000 rupees. The vicissitudes of a military life obliged the projector to leave the district before his experiment could be fairly tried; various reports are afloat

concerning the issue, some persons averring that he lost money by the speculation, while others say that it had paid itself before it was finally abandoned. Lucky persons are not always desirous of publishing good fortune, which may encourage competition. The diamonds of Bundelkund are accumulated unostentatiously, but it is supposed that large supplies go down to the native and European jewellers of Calcutta, and the latter have been known to place a lac of rupees at the disposal of persons diligently employed in searching for them. The natives are, of course, the most fortunate gleaners; they are better acquainted with the probable depositaries of the hidden treasure than casual and often unscientific visitors, and they take care to direct attention from the richest beds.

An officer, who had been tolerably successful in his researches, having picked up forty diamonds, of various sizes, in the course of a short period, happening to ride through a wood, espied a man sitting *dhurna* under a tree, nearly naked, and with ashes on his head, in the attitude of mourning assumed by those who, supposing themselves to be aggrieved, determine to work upon the religious prejudices of their oppressors, by remaining without food, and suffering all the inclemencies of the

weather, until death shall release them, or their prayer be granted. Should they die under the infliction of this penance, the weight of their blood is supposed to rest on the head of the person who has driven them to so horrid an expedient. In this event, the spirit of the departed is permitted to revisit earth, and to haunt his obdurate enemy. Many Hindoos are so deeply persuaded of the enormity they commit, in compelling a petitioner to sue to them in this fearful manner, that they do not consider themselves to be at liberty to eat while a person sitting *dhurna* at their gate is fasting. Such scruples of conscience are necessary for the success of the applicant, who is armed with a powerful pleader when his case is advocated by the craving hunger of his adversary. Upon examining the features of the mourner, disguised as they were by dust and ashes, the officer recognized a *chuprassy* who had formerly been in his service. He inquired into the cause of his distress, and learned that it arose from an act of injustice on the part of the rajah of the district, who had seized upon a large diamond which he had been so fortunate as to pick up in his territories, and refused to give him the sum to which he was entitled by law for a stone of that value. Compassionating the poor

fellow's case, and doubtful of the efficacy of the method which he had taken to obtain redress, the officer directed him to come to his tent in the evening, promising his assistance in the prosecution of his claim. The hope, thus kindly held out, revived the drooping spirits of the diamond-merchant, who, in common with other natives, placed implicit confidence in the success of the representations of a *Bellati saib*, and who, from his own experience, was well acquainted with the benevolent disposition of his former master. The judge of the district made one of the travelling party in camp, and he exerted himself so strenuously in the affair, that he procured from the unwilling justice of the rajah the sum of five thousand rupees, a fortune to a poor *chuprassy*. The man was grateful when put into possession of his riches; he appeared at the door of the tent, his mourning rags exchanged for a gala suit, and his countenance beaming with delight. After a thousand salaams, and an oration, in which, in the figurative language of the East, his benefactor was entitled his father and his mother, and the delegate of the Almighty for the performance of good deeds, he departed to enjoy his prosperity in his own village.

The natives of Hindostan, quick in feeling, and

possessed of a strong spirit of independence, will not tamely submit to acts of injustice. They make astonishing efforts to obtain the redress of wrongs, and never yield until they have tried every means within their power to procure the establishment of their rights. It is astonishing how persevering and pertinacious they will be if their cause be good; the rank and station of their oppressors do not deter them from endeavouring to have justice done them, and if it should be refused in one place they will seek it in another. Servants who have been ill-treated, and who fancy that their story may not meet with attention from the head of a small station on good terms with their masters, will quit the place and make their way to the head-quarters of the district, perhaps at the distance of a hundred miles, and lay their cases before the general officer commanding.

A subahdar belonging to a regiment of native cavalry, deprived of the service by an act of injustice, appealed to the local government, who decided the case against him; undiscouraged by the failure, he took his passage on board an English vessel, homeward-bound, and told his story to the Court of Directors. He had a patient hearing, his case was deemed to be a hard one, and he was sent back

with an order to the local government to make a further enquiry into its merits. This the council of Calcutta refused to do; the subahdar, still undismayed, returned to England, and made a second report to the Court of Directors, who despatched a positive command to their representatives in India to see that justice should be done. Thus admonished, the local government awarded a pension of ten rupees a month; but the gallant subahdar indignantly rejected so paltry a recompence for his injuries, and, disgusted with the disappointment of his wish for restoration to his regiment, entered the service of the King of Oude. He was an intelligent and observant man, and his account of what he saw and heard, during his two visits to England, was exceedingly entertaining. In the intervals occurring in the prosecution of his business, he made two long journies, proceeding to Cornwall to visit the children of an officer belonging to his regiment who were placed at school there, and afterwards to Durham to pay his respects to a retired captain of the corps. Both these journies were undertaken through a feeling of strong attachment towards persons who had been kind to him in former days; and this instance forms one of many falling under

the writer's own knowledge, which refute the charge of heartlessness brought against the people of India by individuals who never sought their good-will.

The navigation of the Jumna was formerly much impeded, and rendered exceedingly perilous by the numerous rocks, which either arose above the stream, or lurked treacherously beneath its surface. The removal of these obstacles has been entrusted to some very young engineer officers, despatched from their head-quarters at Allahabad to different points on the river's bank; they have performed the duty very efficiently, blowing up the rocks in all directions, and deepening the bed of the stream in dangerous shallows. Boats, of the largest size used in inland navigation, may now pass up or down the rapid stream, secure that its strong current will not force them upon some fatal ridge.

The traffic upon the Jumna is very considerable; large quantities of cotton, the growth of the neighbouring districts, are shipped for the Calcutta market, at Humeerpore, Kalpee, Agra, and stations still higher up; the other chief products of the soil, indigo and sugar, also form the loading of numerous vessels; and at Chillah Tarah ghaut,

a thoroughfare of great traffic, goods of all kinds, arriving upon camels from Bombay, by way of Mhow, are embarked for the supply of Bengal.

It is astonishing, with the advantage of such easy communication by the two rivers, to the most distant parts of India, that Allahabad should not have become a commercial and wealthy city, instead of being, as it is, a desolate heap of ruins, tenanted by indigent people, whose numbers and poverty have procured for it amongst their scornful brethren the name of Fakeerabad, or 'beggar's abode.' As it is one of the places pointed out as the probable site of the seat of government, at some not very distant period, there is a chance of its assuming a more prosperous aspect, and of becoming one of the grand emporia for commerce in the upper provinces of Hindostan.

The situation of Allahabad is said to be healthy; but either from its proximity to the two rivers, or the quantity of wood which gives the surrounding country so luxuriant and park-like an appearance, it is more humid than any other place in the Dooab, and is stated to possess a peculiar climate of its own, the hot winds being considerably mitigated, and rain falling at seasons when other parts of the country are dry. The gardens are in consequence

very productive; in those belonging to the British residents, artichokes in particular flourish, attaining a size unknown in less favourable soils in the neighbourhood. The rich tapestry of the jungles, those splendid creepers, which hang their fantastic wreaths upon every adjacent bough, are the great ornament of the pleasure-grounds of Allahabad. The native gardeners train them somewhat formally upon erect bamboos, whence they trail their magnificent garlands down to the ground, forming huge conical mounds, which too frequently bring to mind the May-day spectacle in England, of those moving bowers of green, which appear in the train of the sooty potentates, enjoying their annual *Saturnalia.*

When there are archways or trellis in the gardens, the creepers become a far more graceful decoration. It is unfortunately impossible to twine them round the pillars of the verandahs, without the danger of their affording a harbour for venomous reptiles, and the certainty of their increasing the number of the insects which infest every house. Nothing of the kind is permitted to invite such unwelcome guests; every blade of grass springing in the fructifying season of the rains, being carefully extracted from the soil immediately surrounding

the mansion, lest snakes and other reptiles should glide under the green covert, and insinuate themselves unseen into the chambers, where it is their wont to lie perdue, until aroused or startled from their hiding-places.

The religious creeds, both of Moslem and Hindoo, exhort the rich to plant groves, dig wells, and build public edifices,—acts of charity essential to the comfort of a people living in a country where water, shade, and the shelter of a roof are blessings of incalculable value. The letter of the injunction is strictly regarded by many of the wealthy classes, but its spirit is sadly neglected. Immense sums are lavished upon new buildings, with which the founder hopes to transmit his name to posterity, and which, if not completed in his lifetime, will be left to fall into premature ruin, the heir choosing rather to commence a fresh work than to finish the old one, or to repair the works of others, however elegant in themselves or useful to the public. The banks of the Jumna present many noble ghauts, which are not now available as landing-places, in consequence of the lower steps having given way, and separated themselves from the upper flights, standing out at a distance in the streams. A trifling repair, commenced in time, would have prevented

the mischief; but, though not too late to avert the impending ruin, one by one, the steps will drop away, until the encroaching waters shall swallow up the whole.

Allahabad affords a mournful example of the want of public spirit in the Moosulman population of its neighbourhood. A noble caravanserai, built by Sultan Khosroo, which forms a superb quadrangle, entered by four gothic gateways, and surrounded by cloisters running along the four sides of a battlemented wall, the usual accommodation for travellers offered by an Indian hostel, has been permitted to fall into a state of deplorable decay. The garden adjoining, finely planted with mango-trees, is also in a neglected and deteriorated state; the attention of the government, once directed towards the restoration of the whole, but unfortunately diverted by the breaking out of the Burmese war, has not been recalled to the preservation of remains of great beauty and interest.

Three tombs, erected according to the fine taste displayed by the Mohammedans in the selection of the site of their mausoleums, in this garden, have, from the extraordinary solidity of their construction, escaped the destroying hand of time. Their neglect reflects shame upon the carelessness of those

who can suffer buildings to sink into oblivion, which, in other countries would attract crowds of admiring strangers to descant upon the elegance of their design and the splendour of their execution. Chaste, magnificent, and solemn, they are peculiarly adapted for the purpose to which they have been dedicated, and put to shame the diminutive monuments raised to kings and princes in the cathedrals of the western world. Splendid terraces, forming stately platforms, which, like those of the mausoleums of Agra, are furnished with several apartments below, form the basement story. The central chamber in each contains a stone sarcophagus, in which the mortal remains of the dead are deposited. Above, and occupying the middle of each platform, a circular, dome-crowned hall, finely proportioned and profusely ornamented with rich sculpturing, delights the gazer's eye, who, in their palace-like tombs, sole survivors of the splendour of the Moghuls, is impressed with one of the most amiable traits in the Moslem character—its reverence for the dead and desire to perpetuate the memory of objects beloved in life.

The tombs of Hindostan have proved the most lasting memorials of the wealth, taste, and piety of its Moghul conquerors. While fort and palace

have crumbled away, or have lost their original designs in modern alterations and adaptations, they have remained unchanged; and each succeeding year, in making strangers better acquainted with the architectural beauties of a much-neglected country, will contribute to the establishment of their claims to the admiration of every person possessed of taste and feeling.

A handsome mosque on the bank of the Jumna, at the recommendation of a civilian of eminence, has been put into repair, and restored to its original distinction, as a religious edifice. Upon the subjugation of the province to the British power, it was selected for the residence of the governor of Allahabad, and has since been converted into an assembly-room; but whether, after having been polluted by the introduction of the *burra khanas* of Kafirs, scorners of the prophet and devourers of pork, it can be purified and rendered holy in the eyes of the faithful, is extremely doubtful.

The Jumna bank of Allahabad monopolizes all the interest, that of the Ganges having no particular beauty or merit beyond its common features. The tides of the Jumna, on account of the beds of rock and sand over which they flow, have attractions peculiarly their own; for a considerable dis-

tance after their union with the muddy waters of the superior stream, they retain their brilliant blue, contrasting their crystal currents with the turbid yellow wave with which they are doomed at length to mingle.

CHAPTER II.

CEMETERIES AND FUNERAL OBSEQUIES.

THE dreary character of the European burial-places in British India has already been noticed in many of the preceding pages; but the subject is of too interesting a nature to be passed over with a few casual remarks.

Strangers, visiting our Eastern territories, cannot fail to be impressed with painful feelings, as they survey the gloomy receptacles appropriated to those Christians who are destined to breathe their last in exile. The portion of ground consecrated and set apart as the final resting-place of the European residents, is seldom sufficiently extensive to give "ample room and verge enough" for those who seek repose within its gloomy precincts. All are over-crowded, and many exhibit the most frightful features of a charnel-house, dilapidated tombs, rank vegetation, and unburied bones whitening in the wind. The trees are infested with vultures and other hideous carrion-birds; huge vampire-bats nestle in the walls, which too often present aper-

tures for the admission of wolves and jackalls crowding to their nightly resort, and tearing up the bodies interred without the expensive precautions necessary to secure them from such frightful desecration. The grave must be deep, covered, in the first place, with heavy planks, and afterwards with solid masonry, to preserve the mouldering inhabitant from the attacks of wild and ravenous beasts. In many places it is necessary to have a guard posted every night, until the foundation of the tomb shall be completed.

It is not often that the admiration of the visitor is excited by the monumental remains of the Christian community in India; they consist, for the most part, of clumsy obelisks, stunted pyramids, nondescript columns of a great confusion of orders, and ill-proportioned pedestals bearing all sorts of urns. The most elegant and appropriate are those which are built in imitation of the inferior class of Mussulmaanee tombs, consisting of a sarcophagus, raised upon an elevated platform, approached by handsome flights of steps, and having a domed roof supported upon pillars. But even when these monuments are as large and as handsome as their models, the effect is injured by the inferiority of the situation. An attractive site is almost invaria-

bly chosen by the Moslem for a place of sepulture. Many of the heights in the neighbourhood of Rajmhal are crowned with mausoleums, which have a fort-like appearance; and it is very rarely, though the disciples of the prophet dwelling in the neighbourhood may be poor and few, that the tomb of a brother is neglected; some pious hand is found to sweep away the dust and litter which would otherwise accumulate around it, and to strew flowers over the remains of its perhaps nameless tenant. Indeed, the reverence for the dead entertained by the Mohammedan natives of India, extends to persons of all countries and religions. They, who in their lifetime have acquired a reputation for the virtues most in esteem amongst Asiatics, will not be forgotten in the grave. More than one Christian tomb has become an object of veneration in India, receiving the same respect and homage which the children of the soil pay to those of their own persuasion who have been esteemed saints. Even Hindoos, though shrinking from contact with a corse will reverence the shrines of the warlike or the virtuous dead.

It is strange that so touching an example has not been followed by the European residents, who, at a very small cost, might render the places of inter-

ment destined for their brethren far less revolting than their present aspect. A few labourers attached to each cemetery would keep the whole in order; and as flowers spring up spontaneously in many places, little care or cultivation would be required to convert the coarse dank grass, which seems to offer a harbour for snakes and other venomous reptiles, into a blooming garden; and though, in consequence of the number of tombs, which are crowded, as in England, into the same enclosure, and their inferiority both in size, design, and beauty of the material, a Christian cemetery never could be rendered so imposing and attractive as those spacious and carefully-tended pleasure-grounds surrounding the mausoleums, which add so much to the architectural displays of India, they might be made more agreeable to the eye, and objects of less horror to those who have little hope of living to return to their native land.

In a country where European stations lie at the distance of many days' march from each other, numerous instances occur of deaths upon journies or in remote places, whence it would be impossible, in consequence of the rapid decomposition produced by the climate, to convey the body to consecrated ground. Upon such occasions, the corse

is usually interred upon the spot, and travellers frequently find those monumental remains in wild and jungly districts, which shew that there the hand of death has overtaken an individual, perchance journeying onwards with the same confidence which animates their own breasts.

The perambulators of the ruined palace of Rajmhal, whose marble halls are left to the exclusive possession of the lizard and the bat, are struck, on entering a court surrounded by picturesque buildings falling fast into decay, with the appearance of two European tombs. The scene is one of desolation and neglect, but it does not display those disgusting images which sicken the spirit in cemeteries, owing their dreariness and desolation to the indifference of the living. The despotic power of time, the fall of earthly splendour, pictured in the forsaken palace of the former rulers of Bengal, harmonize well with the wreck of human hopes, the fragility of human life, illustrated by the lonely Christian monuments rising in that once proud spot, whence the heathen lord and his Mussulman conquerors have passed away for ever. Above, on the summit of a green hill, a marble pedestal, surmounted by an urn, attracts the attention of the voyagers of the Ganges; it is

said to mark the place in which a beautiful young Englishwoman fell a victim to one of those sudden attacks of illness which are so often fatal to new arrivals. This memorial, glittering in the sun, forms a very conspicuous object; but while telling its melancholy tale, the sad reflections, which are conjured up by the untimely fate of one so young and lovely, are soothed by the conviction that the gentle stranger at least found an appropriate resting-place, amidst a scene of never-fading verdure, where the flowers and the foliage, the birds and the butterflies, are the fairest and brightest which gleam beneath a tropical sun.

The most interesting, though not the most splendid, monument commemorating the virtues of an English resident in India, occurs in the neighbourhood of Rajmhal. It is a cenotaph, of Hindoo architecture, raised by the natives of the adjacent hill districts, to the memory of Augustus Cleveland, who formerly filled the office of judge at Boglipore. Two fakirs are employed to keep a lamp continually burning within the building, and once a-year a festival is held at the spot, the annual celebration of the apotheosis of that highly-reverenced individual, whom the poor people, who were the objects of his benevolent care, regard with feel-

ings nearly approaching to idolatry. Mr. Cleveland died at sea, and his body occupies a neglected spot in a cemetery at Calcutta; but this circumstance appears to be overlooked by both natives and Europeans, who usually suppose that the tomb of Boglipore is the place of his interment.

This excellent person expired in his twenty-ninth year. Few men during so short a life have achieved so much lasting good. Upon his appointment to the office of judge at Boglipore, he became exceedingly interested in the fate and fortunes of the people who inhabited the neighbouring hills, and who, though living under the protection of the British government, were subjected to much oppression and violence from the dwellers in the plains. They are Hindoos, but not of strict caste, polluting themselves with food rejected by their more rigid brethren, and are consequently held in the utmost contempt by the fanatic disciples of Brahma. Repaying the injuries inflicted upon them with rapine and bloodshed, a desolating war had long been carried on between them and the lowland borderers, and Mr. Cleveland was the first person, armed with the means of rescuing them from their degraded condition, who inquired into their situation and circumstances, and endeavoured

to bring them within the pale of civilized society. His efforts were rewarded by success: his unremitting kindness won their confidence; they submitted implicitly to his regulations, and, trusting to his promises of protection, brought the products of their villages to the bazaars he established in places which, in former times, they could only visit at the risk of their lives. These hill-people, destitute as they are of caste, and despised by their arrogant neighbours, possess in a very high degree one virtue, which is wholly unknown to the true Hindoo character,—adherence to truth. Though Asiatics entertain a respect for those on whose veracity they can firmly rely, lying is not esteemed a vice amongst them, and no one convicted of falsehood runs the slightest hazard of incurring contempt: hence, while their fidelity may be depended upon, not the slightest faith can be given to their assurances; they are little scrupulous about perjuring themselves, and though oaths are administered in courts of law, the truth can only be elicited by the most searching cross-examinations.

The mountaineers of this part of the country, notwithstanding the wild and lawless life to which they had been long accustomed, have proved loyal

and orderly subjects; they are not often found in the service of Europeans, being looked upon as pariahs and outcasts by the other domestics of the establishment, whose prejudices are very frequently adopted by their Christian masters; but they are sometimes to be seen amidst the retainers of an Anglo-Indian, and touching instances are related of their fidelity and attachment to those from whom they have received kindness. A medical gentleman being sent for to attend a brother officer in the jungles, found the patient dead, and deserted by all his servants excepting one, a poor fellow from the hills, who remained by the side of the corse fanning away the flies, and not stirring from his post until the last sad offices were performed. It is pleasing to be able to add, that this meritorious conduct met its reward, The gentleman who obtained so striking a proof of the poor bearer's devotion to his master, took him immediately into his own service, where he was treated with the kindest consideration, and protected from the insolence of the other domestics, who frequently received very mortifying lessons from a master anxious to shew them that he entertained more regard for character than for caste.

There is perhaps no district belonging to India,

which offers more favourable prospects to the missionary; but, hitherto, little or no attempt has been made to instruct the wild mountaineers of Rajmhal, either in religion, or the agricultural or domestic arts. While disappointment awaits the ambitious invaders of the strong-holds of Hindoo superstition, the promise of an ample harvest is unaccountably neglected, and, excepting the little which can be done by the civil and military authorities at Boglipore, for those immediately under their jurisdiction, a very interesting and intelligent race of people are left without any instruction whatsoever.

The services performed by Mr. Cleveland to the inhabitants of the hills will never be forgotten; forty years have elapsed since his death, but his memory remains as fresh as ever in the breasts of the descendants of those who were the objects of his benevolence. This affecting trait of character is not, however, confined to the simple and ignorant race scattered along the range of mountains between the Ganges and Burdwan, but is common to all the natives of Hindostan. The reverential regard which all castes entertain for the great Secunder, who, though supposed by the people of India to be the Macedonian hero, was, in all probability, one of

the successors to his divided empire, is manifested in a very striking manner. Though Christian warriors have not obtained so extensive a reputation, the impression which their virtues have made upon the natives is not less deep and lasting.

A tomb, in the neighbourhood of Agra, in which the remains of an European officer, who spent his whole life in the performance of kindly deeds, are deposited, is much venerated by the natives, who bestow upon it the honours of a lamp; and in some part of Bombay, the sentinels on duty present arms at a certain period of the night,—a mark of respect paid to the spirit of an English officer of rank, who was adored by the people he commanded, and who, being now esteemed a saint, is supposed to revisit earth in the glimpses of the moon. Had it been the fortune of Warren Hastings to have found a sepulchre in Bengal, the crowds who now recite verses in his honour, and link his name with enthusiastic blessings, would have assembled annually at his tomb, and rejoiced in the supposition that his spirit still hovered over the land which had rightly appreciated those services which were so shamefully unrequited in his own country.

The circumstances attending the burial of the Christian sojourners of India, who die far from the

dwellings of their European brethren, are often exceedingly melancholy. An incident of a very frightful nature, which I believe has been recorded in some novel illustrative of Anglo-Indian life, occurred about the period of Lord Hastings' government. A civilian, whose duty had taken him into a remote part of his district, was returning home *dàk*, in consequence of an attack of fever, having written to his wife by express to acquaint her with his illness, and the time in which she might expect his arrival. While travelling, he rested during the heat of the day at the *serai* of a native village; and while reposing there, he learned that an European had just breathed his last in an adjoining chamber. Anxious to secure decent interment to the body, which, he was aware, if left to the disposal of strangers of a different religion, entertaining a horror of contaminating themselves by polluting contact with an unclean thing, would be treated very unceremoniously, he struggled with his illness, and attended the remains of his fellow-sufferer to the grave, reading the burial-service appointed by the church over the place of sepulture, and seeing that every requisite ceremony was properly performed. Exhausted by this sad and painful duty, he got into his palanquin, but had not proceeded far

before he was overtaken by the pangs of death: a paroxysm of fever seized him, and he expired on the road. The bearers fled into the woods, leaving their inanimate burthen on the ground, for nothing save the strongest attachment can induce a native of India to touch, or continue with a dead body which does not belong to a person of their own caste. In the meantime, the wife of this unfortunate gentleman, alarmed by the tidings of her husband's illness, had hastened to meet him, and was made acquainted with her loss by the frightful spectacle which met her eyes, the breathless and deserted corse of the object dearest to her lying on the road. She could gain little assistance from her own bearers, whose caste or whose prejudices kept them aloof; and finding it impossible to induce them to touch the body, she sent them to the neighbouring village to summon more efficient aid, taking upon herself the melancholy office of watching the fast decaying remains. She soon found that her utmost strength would be insufficient to repel the daring attacks of hosts of insects, ravenous birds, and savage animals, rushing on their prey, or congregating in the neighbouring thickets, awaiting an advantageous moment for attack; and, in the energy of her despair, she tore away the earth

with her own hands, making a grave large enough to conceal the body from the eyes of its numerous assailants. How this story is told in the work before mentioned, I know not, but I received the present version of it from an intimate friend of the survivor.

During my own residence in Calcutta, a death took place in the jungles in its neighbourhood, attended by very distressing circumstances. It had become absolutely necessary for a gentleman, engaged in the indigo-trade, to pay a visit to a distant factory. The contemplation of this journey was painful in the extreme; though in perfect health, it affected his spirits in so extraordinary a degree, that he could only be induced to undertake it by the severest remonstrances of the members of the mercantile house with which he was connected. Under the most unaccountable dejection of mind, he entered his palanquin, and after having travelled a stage or two, alighted, and, telling his bearers that he would speedily rejoin them, struck into the neighbouring thickets. The men waited for a considerable time, expecting his return, and, unwilling to hurry or intrude upon the privacy of a superior, who would in all probability resent their interference. At length, becoming alarmed, they

reported the circumstance at the next *thannah*, or police-office. The thannahdar immediately sent out his people to search the jungle, and in one of its most solitary nooks they found the body of the traveller, lying under a tree, and already half-devoured by the jackalls. The exact circumstances of his death were wrapped in a veil of impenetrable mystery. It was impossible, in the torn and mangled state of the corse, to ascertain whether he had perished by his own hand, or if the surrounding horrors of the scene, the harrowing thoughts crowding on the soul of an exile, and the fearful state of excitement, occasioned by reminiscences of home, to those who, repressing their feelings in public, give loose in solitude to the anguish of their hearts, proved too much for the outward frame, and snapped the fragile thread of life. Nothing farther could be elicited by the strictest inquiry, and the friends and relatives of the deceased were left to the most mournful conjectures.

The impossibility of procuring prompt medical aid, in passing through the country between the European stations, forms a cruel aggravation to the distress of the companions of those who may be taken ill upon a journey. A newly-married bride embarked with her husband, who belonged to the

civil service of the Company, on board a budgerow, with the intent to proceed to Patna, where he had received an appointment. The bridegroom, attacked by illness upon the river, while at a considerable distance from any European dwelling, languished for a few hours and then expired. The servants endeavoured to persuade the sorrowing widow to permit them to land the body and have it interred in the jungle; but to this she would not consent, and immediately betaking themselves to the baggage-boat, they left her alone with the corse. Instead of proceeding on a voyage, whose object had been defeated by the death of the principal person of the party, it was deemed advisable to turn the head of the boat round, and go down the river. The wind unfortunately was adverse, and notwithstanding the strength of the current, the vessel made little progress. Imagination cannot picture any thing more horrible than the office which devolved upon one who remained faithful even in death. The atmosphere soon became so offensive as scarcely to be endurable; the body decayed rapidly; the heat was excessive, and the object for which so much misery had been braved seemed unattainable. No less-devoted heart could have hoped to secure the rites of Christian burial

for the already putrid corse, yet did this young creature, who, until her melancholy loss, had known hardship and sorrow only by name, resolutely persevere in this dreadful duty. At length, about eight o'clock in the morning of the third day, the boat approached a European dwelling. Upon the first communication with the shore, the inhabitants were apprized that a lady had arrived with the dead body of her husband, and they immediately hastened to the spot to offer her all the consolation and assistance in their power. The master of the house took the corpse under his own charge, and giving the widow over to the care of his wife, issued the necessary orders concerning the interment. It was with some difficulty that the remains could be placed in the coffin hastily prepared for their reception; but it was accomplished at last, and the sad ceremonials proceeded with those decent solemnities which it had cost so much suffering to obtain.

Notwithstanding the little attention which is given in India to the places of sepulture belonging to Christian communities, it is thought necessary to pay marks of respect to the dead, which are often followed by fatal consequences to the living. A very large attendance at the grave, during the performance of the funeral obsequies, is rigorously

exacted by the prejudices of society. Ladies are not, as in England, exempted from this painful duty; at the death of a female friend their presence at the period of interment is expected, and their neglecting to appear, without adequate cause, is construed into a mark of disrespect. The nearest relation of the deceased has been known, on his return from the burial of the most beloved object in the world, to count over the absentees, and descant upon their evasion of so sacred an obligation, while the commentator might with more justice be accused of indifference to the effects of a scene upon female sensibility, which has sometimes proved too harrowing for the feelings of the stronger sex. Illness and even death have been the result of attendance at the last melancholy rites performed to a brother exile committed to foreign earth; the shock sustained by new arrivals is often of a dangerous nature, especially amongst the uneducated classes of society. A detachment of recruits, injudiciously commanded to follow the bodies of their comrades to the grave, afforded, during my sojourn at a Mofussil station, convincing proof of the effect of mind upon matter. Ten or twelve dropped during the service; several of these were taken up dead, and of the number conveyed to the hospital,

not more than one recovered. The solemn office performed at funerals has often proved a death-warrant to the living, especially when surrounded by all the distressing circumstances with which it is frequently invested in India. The sudden nature of the dissolution, the necessary rapidity of the interment, deepen the horror of those who see their friends and acquaintances snatched from them by an invisible hand, and who are thus warned that danger is lurking abroad where they least expected to find it.

The undertakers of Calcutta are accustomed to send circular printed notices of funerals, filled up with the name of the deceased, to the houses of those persons who are expected to attend. This is probably the first intimation which many dear and attached friends obtain of their loss. On one occasion, a gentleman, after a few hours' absence from home, found on the hall-table a black-edged ominous missive of this kind, which acquainted him with the death of an individual whom he regarded with affection surpassing that of a brother, and with whom he had parted the preceding evening in perfect health. He rushed to the house where he was wont to meet with the most cordial welcome from lips now closed for ever, and only arrived in

time to take a last view of the insensible remains. The officials were almost in the act of nailing the lid of the coffin down as he entered, preparatory to its committal to the hearse, and in the course of another hour he was standing suffocated with grief beside the grave of his dearest friend.

The sensibilities of many persons are so much affected by the sight of the funeral processions, which almost every evening wend their way to the burial-ground of Calcutta, as to render them unwilling to live in Park Street, the avenue which leads to it. This cemetery occupies a large tract of ground on the outskirts of the fashionable suburb, Chowringee. Beyond it, the waste jungly space, partially covered with native huts, and intersected by pools of stagnant water, adds to the desolate air of the enclosure, with its tasteless and ill-kept monuments. The scene is calculated to inspire the most gloomy emotions, and it is saying a great deal for the fortitude displayed by females, that no instance is recorded of their sinking under the combination of depressing circumstances which must weigh upon their imaginations, when they are compelled to appear in person as mourners. The office of bearing the pall devolves upon the dearest friends of the deceased, who, upon alighting from their

carriages at the porch of the burial-ground, arrange themselves in the melancholy order which has been pointed out to them. Funerals always take place at sunset; and in the rainy season the state of the atmosphere, and the dampness of the ground, materially increase the perils to be encountered by delicate women, exposed to mental and bodily suffering in a manner considered so unnecessary in the land of their birth. But the rules established by Anglo-Indian society are absolute, and must be complied with, upon pain of outlawry.

In former times, the burial-ground belonging to the cathedral was the only place of interment in Calcutta; but funerals have long been discontinued in this part of the city. "Before the commencement of the year 1802," says the monumental register, "the tombs in this cemetery had fallen into irreparable decay; and to prevent any dangerous accident which the tottering ruins threatened to such as approached them, it was deemed necessary to pull down most of them. The stone and marble tablets were carefully cleared from the rubbish, and laid against the wall of the cemetery, where they now stand." Our chronicler, however, does not go on to say that this act of desecration,

the work of the reverend gentleman at the head of clerical affairs, gave great umbrage to the Christian population of Calcutta, who, though perchance in some degree answerable for the consequences of the neglect which produced the ruin above described, became exceedingly incensed at the root-and-branch work, considered expedient to level the church-yard, and get rid of all its incumbrances.

One of the monuments thus ruthlessly removed, had been erected to the memory of Governor Job Charnock, the founder of the most splendid British settlement in the world. The chequered fortunes of this hardy adventurer are too well-known to all who take an interest in the proceedings of the early Indian colonists, to need any notice here. He died on the 10th January 1692. "If," says our chronicler, "the dead knew any thing of the living, and could behold with mortal feelings this sublunary world, with what sensations would the father of Calcutta glow to look down this day upon his city!" The private life of Governor Charnock presents a romantic incident not very uncommon at the period in which he flourished. Abolishing the rite of suttee, in a more summary manner than has been considered politic by his successors, he, struck by the charms of a young Hindoo female about to

be sacrificed for the eternal welfare of her husband, directed his guards to rescue the unwilling victim from the pile. They obeyed, and conveying the widow, who happened to be exceedingly beautiful, and not more than fifteen years old, to his house, he took her under his protection, and an attachment thus hastily formed lasted until the time of her death, many years afterwards. Notwithstanding the loss of caste, which the lady sustained in exchanging a frightful sacrifice for a life of splendid luxury, the governor does not seem to have been at any pains to induce her to embrace Christianity. On the contrary, he himself appears to have been strangely imbued with pagan superstitions, for, having erected a mausoleum for the reception of the body, he ordered the sacrifice of a cock to her manes on the anniversary of her death, and this custom was continued until he was also gathered to his fathers. This mausoleum, one of the oldest pieces of masonry in Calcutta, is still in existence. Monuments of the like nature, with the exception of the annual slaughter of an animal, are to be seen in many parts of India; connexions between Indian women and English gentlemen of rank and education being often of the tenderest and most enduring description. Nor do these unions excite

the horror and indignation amongst the natives that might be expected from their intolerant character; so far from it, indeed, that in many instances they have been known to offer public testimonials of their respect to those who have been faithful in their attachments throughout a series of years.

There is a very beautiful mausoleum, which attracts the visitor's eye in the immediate neighbourhood of a large native city, erected to the honour of a Moosulmanee lady, who lived for forty years with a civilian attached to the adjacent station; some of the rich inhabitants of the city, desirous to shew the opinion they entertained of the conduct of both parties, presented a canopy of cloth of gold, richly embroidered, of the value of £1,000, to be placed, according to native custom, over the sarcophagus. That native women do not consider their seclusion from the world as any hardship, is plainly evinced by the mode of life which they voluntarily adopt on becoming the nominal wives of Englishmen. In most cases (always, if they have been respectable before their entrance into his family), they confine themselves as strictly to the *zenana* of their Christian protector, as if the marriage had taken place according to their

own forms and ceremonies; and, excepting in a few instances, where they adopt the externals of Christianity, they never make their appearance abroad, but act in all respects as they would deem becoming in the lawful wife of a Mussulman or Hindoo of rank. This of course does not hold good with the lower orders, Ayahs, and others, who, having already forfeited their characters by publicly associating with men, have no respectability to keep up, and act openly in the most profligate manner.

One of the few monuments permitted to remain is of a very interesting character, and consists of fourteen pillars, raised to the memory of the same number of British officers who fell under General Abercrombie, about four-and-thirty years ago, in a dreadful conflict with the Rohillas. Upon this occasion, the Company's troops were left to fight single-handed; for, although their allies, composed of 30,000 men, were brought into the field by the Nawáb of Lucknow, they remained quiet spectators of the fray until victory had decided for the English: so high did the character of the Rohillas stand, that the men of Oude dared not take part against them without being assured of their defeat. An obelisk is raised upon the spot where these de-

voted soldiers fell; and the glory of this splendid action is further commemorated by the alteration of the name of the village in Rohilcund, which was the scene of the battle: it was formerly called *Beetora*, but is now styled by the natives *Futty gunge*, the 'place of victory.'

A few European residents in India have provided for the accommodation of their remains after death, by building their own tombs. Colonel Skinner, the commandant of the most distinguished corps of irregular horse in the Company's service, an officer not less celebrated for his gallantry in the field than for the splendour of his hospitality, has erected in the centre of a blooming garden, at his jaghire at Balaspore, a mausoleum of a very tasteful and elegant description, destined to contain the "mortal coil," when his chivalric spirit shall have fled. He is thus secure of a worthy resting-place, which is not always the case with those, however wealthy, who are content with leaving directions respecting their interment in their wills.

General Claude Martin, who has been not unjustly styled "a brave, ambitious, fortunate, and munificent Frenchman," having from a private soldier risen to the highest rank in the Company's

army, constructed a tomb for himself in the underground floor of a grotesquely magnificent house, which he built at Lucknow. The body is deposited in a handsome altar-shaped sarcophagus of white marble, surmounted by a marble bust, and inscribed with a few lines, which do credit to his modesty: "Major-General Claude Martin, born at Lyons, January 1738; arrived in India as a common soldier, and died at Lucknow on the 15th of September 1800. Pray for his soul!" Surrounding the tomb stand four figures of grenadiers, as large as life, with their arms reversed, in the striking and expressive attitude used at military funerals; but the effect of this groupe is completely marred by the substitution of mean plaister effigies for the marble statues which General Martin intended should have formed the appropriate appendages of his monument. A large proportion of the property of this fortunate adventurer was devoted to charitable purposes, which, according to the prevailing notions on the subject of political economy, do more honour to the hearts than the heads of testators. Such doctrines, however, would be at present extremely ill-understood in India, where the wisdom which would withhold succour

to the poor, the aged, and the infirm, requires a much more intimate acquaintance with the schoolmaster to be properly appreciated.

In some of the very small European stations, no piece of consecrated ground has yet been set apart, as the final depositary of those who are destined to draw their last breath in exile. Though not always particularly ornamental in the immediate neighbourhood of a dwelling-house, the clumsy obelisks and ill-proportioned pyramids, reared over the bodies of the dead, form very interesting memorials to those who entertain a pious feeling towards their departed brethren. Tombs not unfrequently occur in the gardens and pleasure-grounds of the habitations of British residents, in the remote parts of the Upper Provinces, where they have a much better chance of being kept in good repair than in the crowded charnels of more populous places. The only inconvenience which ever arises from a close vicinity to the mansions of the dead, is occasioned by the superstition of the natives, whose notions regarding spirits are of the strangest and most unaccountable nature imaginable. Many do not object to take up their own abode in a sepulchre. There is nothing extraordinary in the metamorphosis of a Moosulmanee tomb into the residence of

an English gentleman, many choosing to appropriate the spacious apartments, so needlessly provided for the dead, to the accommodation of the living. This sort of desecration is not objected to on the part of the Indian servants of the household, neither do they seem to entertain any fears of the resentment of the spirit whose quiet is thus disturbed; sometimes, as in the case of the sentinels before-mentioned, who present arms at a certain hour of the night, under the idea that they are doing honour to the disembodied soul of a distinguished individual, they rejoice in the supposition that they hold communion with departed spirits; but in many instances they appear to be governed by the most arbitrary feelings.

A bungalow in Bundelkhund was invariably deserted at sunset by all the servants of the establishment, notwithstanding their attachment to a very indulgent master, in consequence of a Christian infant, of some three or four years old, having been buried in the garden. It was said that the ghost of this poor child walked, and at a particular period of the night approached the house and made a modest demand for bread and butter,—an incident too full of horror to be borne! There was no

remedy against the panic occasioned by this notion. The bungalow occupied a wild and desolate site on the top of a steep hill, infested by tigers and other savage beasts; and every night its solitary European inhabitant was left to the enjoyment of the wild serenades of these amateur performers, the servants decamping *en masse* to the village at its base.

In many parts of India, the natives fill *gurrahs* of water from the Ganges, and hang them on the boughs of the peepul trees, supposed to be haunted by the spirits of the dead, in order that they may drink of the sacred stream; but the expedient of laying a piece of bread and butter on the hungry infant's tomb does not appear to have occurred to the alarmed domestics. Many European houses in India are deserted in consequence of the reputation they have obtained of being haunted. But ghosts are not the only intruders dreaded by a superstitious people; demons disturb the peace of some families, and as there is no contending against the powers of darkness, the inhabitants are compelled to quit their residences, and give them up to desolation and decay. A splendid mansion on the Chowringee road, to which some ridiculous legend is attached, is untenanted and falling into ruin. No one can

be found to occupy it; the windows have deserted their frames, the doors hang loosely upon one hinge, rank grass has sprung up in its deserted courts, and fringed the projecting cornices, while the whole affords a ghastly spectacle, and seems the fitting haunt of vampires and of goules.

The inscriptions upon the monumental remains of India are generally distinguished for their simplicity and plain good sense; sometimes, as in country church-yards at home, the grief of the survivors will outrun their discretion, and produce ludicrous expressions sadly out of place; occasionally, also, the epitaphs are rather too ostentatious, but the greater proportion of tomb-stones, covering the dust of the Christian population, merely bear the name of the person who sleeps beneath, and the date of the period of their erection. In no instance is there any striking display of literary talent, and many of the most distinguished servants of the Company, are suffered to repose without any written record of their public or private merits. The cemeteries of India, however, present numerous affecting testimonials of the reverential regard felt by the brother officers, of the brave youth who have perished untimely in the service of their country; some of the handsomest and proudest of

these monumental remains have been raised by sorrowing comrades to young men scarcely beyond the age of boyhood, endeared to society by their domestic virtues, or challenging the applause of the world by some gallant action. Subscriptions for the erection of a tomb over the grave of a brother in arms, are common in the corps of the native army, and the most circumscribed burial-grounds are rarely without one or more of these tributes to departed virtue.

The residents of Madras have set the example of employing eminent English sculptors for the monuments raised to those whom they desire to honour. One, to the memory of Dr. Anderson, in St. George's Church, the work of Chantrey, is described to be a noble specimen of art; but though it would be comparatively easy to decorate the three presidencies with the labours of British chisels, the Upper Provinces must, for a very long period to come, depend upon the exertion of native talent. Though busts and statues could not at present be produced by Asiatic hands, there would be no difficulty in procuring an exact representation of the most beautiful models which taste could design.

CHAPTER III.

MONGHYR.

BEFORE our conquests in India had extended themselves throughout the whole of Hindostan, Monghyr, which in the time of the Moghuls was considered a place of great importance, formed one of the principal military stations of the British army. While it was selected for the depôt for ammunition, since removed to Allahabad, it enjoyed all the honours of a frontier-fortress; but, in consequence of the immense portion of territory which now divides it from the boundaries of our possessions, it has been suffered to fall into decay. A few invalided soldiers garrison the dismantled citadel, which has been turned into an asylum for lunatics belonging to the native army, and a depôt for military clothing, the tailors in the neighbourhood being considered particularly expert.

Monghyr is situated upon a rocky promontory abutting into the Ganges, and the walls of the fort, raised upon a sharp angle, have a fine effect: the point on which they stand, when the river is full

and the current strong, renders the navigation difficult and dangerous to boats, which can only pass with a favourable wind, and run great risk of being driven against the rocks. The Ganges at this place is extremely wide, appearing almost like a sea; and vessels being often detained by contrary winds at the ghauts of Monghyr, when a change takes place, the whole surface of the water is covered with barks of every description. The distance from Calcutta is about two hundred and seventy miles, and nothing can exceed the beauty of the situation. The remains of the fort are very striking; the plain is diversified by ridges of rock richly wooded, and upon some of the most favourable sites the European residents have erected those palace-like houses which give a regal air to the splendid landscapes of Bengal. The native town is irregular, and in many parts extremely picturesque, several of the bazaars stretching in long lines beneath the umbrageous shelter of magnificent groves. At the south and eastern gates of the fort there are streets, composed of brick houses, sufficiently wide for carriages to pass; but the remainder consists of scattered dwellings, chiefly built of mud. The place of worship in most repute amongst the Mahommedans is the monument of Peer Shah Lohauni, which is held in

great reverence by all classes of the people, the Hindoos making frequent offerings at the shrine of this saint, so highly is his memory venerated throughout the district.

A considerable trade is carried on at Monghyr, from the manufactories of the place; the workmen possess considerable skill, and construct palanquins, European carriages, and furniture, in a very creditable manner. Under the inspection of persons well acquainted with these arts, they can produce goods of a very superior description, and at an astonishingly low price. A well-carved, high-backed arm-chair, with a split cane seat, was obtained by the writer for six rupees (12s.). The clothing for the army is made here; and it is celebrated for its shoes, both of the Native and European forms. But the most famous of its manufactures is that of the blacksmiths, who work up steel and iron into a great variety of forms: these goods are coarse, and not of the very best description; but they are useful, especially to the natives, and remarkably cheap. Double-barrelled guns are sold for thirty-two rupees each, rifles at thirty, and table-knives and forks at six rupees per dozen. Upon the arrival of a budgerow at Monghyr, the native vendors of almost innumerable commodities

repair to the waterside in crowds, establishing a sort of fair upon the spot. Cages filled with specimens of rare birds from the hills, or with the more interesting of the reptiles, such as chameleons; chairs, tables, work-boxes, baskets, and cutlery of all kinds, are brought down to tempt the new arrivals; and few boats pass up the river, having strangers to the country on board, without furnishing customers to these industrious people. Young men, especially, who have not supplied themselves with the *chef d'œuvres* of Egg or Manton, risk the loss of life or limb by the purchase of rifles for tiger-shooting, which, to inexperienced eyes, have a very fair appearance, being only rather slight in the stock, and weak and irregular in the screws. It is perhaps safest to confine the purchases to iron goods of native construction; spears, which are necessary articles in the upper country, are of the best kind, and are sold at twenty annas (about 1s. 4d.) each; an inferior sort may be obtained for fourteen annas; and the *ungeetahs*, iron tripods in which charcoal is burned, are excellent. The only things that are wanting to improve the quality of the steel are a superior method of smelting, and a higher degree of labour bestowed on the anvil: the guns are not warranted not to burst, and it is not

very difficult either to break or to bend the knives. The art has been followed in Monghyr from time immemorial, the Vulcan of the Hindoo mythology having been supposed to have set up his forge at this place.

Since the importation of European fashions, a vast number of new articles have been introduced into the shops of the natives; tea-kettles, tea-trays, toasting-forks, saucepans, and other culinary vessels unknown in the kitchens of the Moslem or Hindoo, are exhibited for sale; and both the ghaut, when vessels are passing up and down, and the bazaars, present a very lively scene, from the variety of the commodities and the gay costumes of the people.

In the changes which are now taking place in British India, Monghyr will, in all probability, be made to rival Sheffield or Birmingham in its manufactures; and it is rather extraordinary that no European cutler or gunsmith has yet been tempted to open a shop in this place. There would be no difficulty in rendering native workmen quite equal to those of England; and as the prejudices formerly entertained by the Anglo-Indian community against the imitation of European manufactures by less-practised hands is fast giving way, the

guns and knives of Monghyr would be as much sought after as the saddles and harness of Cawnpore.

The establishment of manufactures in India would afford the best method of employing British capital, for natives of respectability, though not objecting to the occupation of merchants, and willing to sell every article that may be consigned to them, consider it to be *infra dig*, to superintend the mechanical part. Hence the artisans of India, left to their own resources, are unable to make any improvements in their art which will incur additional expense. The excellence of the workmanship of those employed in the service of Europeans, show how easily they can be trained to any mechanical employment when under the superintendence of scientific persons.

The fort of Monghyr occupies a large portion of ground, and though no longer affording any idea of a place of defence, is both striking and ornamental. It has not, like Allahabad, been ever modernized, or adapted to the prevailing system of warfare, but retains all its Asiatic character. Within the walls there is a plain of considerable extent, sprinkled with some majestic trees, and having two large tanks of water, the most considerable cover-

ing a couple of acres. The part which faces the river commands a splendid view, the distance being bounded by the ranges of the Rajmhal and Gurruckpore hills, which embay the Ganges on either side.

In addition to the invalided soldiers of the native army, there are a few European veterans settled in Monghyr, pensioners of the Company, who have relinquished all thoughts of home, and are content to spend the remainder of their days in the country which they entered in early youth. They have the choice of residence at four stations, Monghyr, Buxar, Chunar, or Moorshedabad; and the latter, it is said, is selected by the disreputable characters amongst these old soldiers, who are, however, sometimes very capricious, changing frequently before they can satisfy themselves which is the best and most agreeable retreat for their declining years. Officers upon the invalid establishment have a wider latitude, and obtain leave very easily to reside in any place which may suit them; they are not allowed to retire to Europe, nor does their promotion go on from the period of their quitting active service; but they have the full pay of their rank, and it affords an honourable provision for many, even young officers, who have not health or incli-

nation for the performance of military duties; nor does a retirement upon the invalid establishment utterly extinguish hope, since there are several staff-appointments attached to it, to which those who can make interest at head-quarters may look up. The invalided native soldier is one of the happiest and most contented persons in the world. He reaps the reward of all his previous toil, sits down to the enjoyment of untroubled rest with a competence sufficient to provide him with the comforts of life, and with the consciousness of occupying a respectable station in society. The profession of a soldier is in India considered highly honourable; so far from feeling degraded by the livery of war, it is the reward of good conduct, in a discharged sepoy, to be permitted to carry his uniform away with him to his native village, where it is worn upon great occasions, and commands the respect of all his associates.

The European society at Monghyr is rather limited, and in consequence of the major part being composed of persons belonging to the invalid establishment, who seek it as a place of retirement, the station is never a scene of gaiety: there are, however, appointments which are held by civil and military servants of the Company, who form a

little circle amongst themselves, which is enlivened occasionally by the visits of strangers passing up and down, and officers upon military duty, surveys, &c. from Dinapore, which is situated at an easy distance. The attractions of Monghyr, as a residence, must be, notwithstanding the temporary sojourn of guests, confined to the scenery, which combines every beauty that the rich and fertile provinces on either side can produce. The gently-rising hills and rocky ledges which diversify the landscape, offer new features to the traveller, who perchance has begun to weary of the flatness of the plains below, notwithstanding their magnificent embellishments of temples, groves, and palaces. About five miles from Monghyr there are some hot springs, which few people fail to visit who remain long enough at the place to make the excursion. They are situated at Seeta-coond, 'well of Seeta,' and though not possessing any medical properties, the water is much sought after on account of its great purity. The springs are enclosed in a cistern of brick, eighteen feet square. The temperature is so hot as to cause death to any animal venturing into it. There is a record of an European soldier who attempted to swim across, but was so miserably scalded as not to survive the perilous exploit. There

is a difference in the degrees of heat at different periods, but the highest point to which the thermometer has risen upon immersion is said to be 163°. Persons travelling down the country, with the intention of returning to England, generally provide themselves with several dozens of bottles of the water from Seeta-coond, to serve as sea stock. It is the greatest luxury which can be imagined on board ship, where the quantity of the fresh element is limited, and where its quality is usually of the worst description. The well at Seeta-coond is sacred, and several brahmins are established in its neighbourhood, who are not above receiving a rupee from the Christian visitants: there appears to be no pollution in money; they, who would not touch an article of furniture belonging to persons of low or impure caste, have no hesitation where gold and silver coins are concerned—an inconsistency which, when pointed out to these scrupulous persons, they vainly attempt to justify.

The ground in the neighbourhood of these springs is exceedingly rocky, and furnishes many curious geological specimens; fluor and mica are plentiful, and *ubruc*, talc, or *lapis specularis*, also is very common. It is found in large masses, which divide easily into tough thin laminæ, perfectly

transparent. Formerly this substance was much in request with Europeans as a substitute for window-glass, but it is not now ever used for that purpose. It still forms the principal material for the ornamental portion of the decorations at native festivals, and when painted with a variety of colours, and illuminated, it is often employed in the construction of mimic palaces, rivalling that of Aladdin, or, as he is styled in India, Alla-ud-deen, in splendour. The hills in the distance are chiefly composed of lime-stone, far advanced in decomposition; they are exceedingly wild in their appearance, and inhabited by numerous tribes of savage animals. The passes of these elevations are infested with tigers, and travellers compelled to tread their labyrinths, encounter great risks. It is said that, when one of these ferocious animals lies in wait for a string of passengers, he usually selects the last of the party; and, under this impression, the palanquin and banghie bearers huddle together, keeping as close to each other as possible, in order to prevent their enemy from singling out a straggler for his meal. In solitary houses in this district, a tiger has been known in the evening, when the doors and windows happened not to be sufficiently secured, to walk into the central apartment,

a strange unbidden guest: this is no very uncommon occurrence in the dák bungalows, erected by government for the accommodation of passengers proceeding to the upper country by the new road, which, between Calcutta and Benares, is cut through the jungle, which shortens the distance, but renders it extremely dangerous.

Bears are very numerous in these hills; and their size, strength, and exceeding fierceness, render them little less formidable than the tiger. However, young men, too fond of sport to be deterred by any peril, sometimes amuse themselves during the brief rest which the *dák* bungalows offer, by going out in search of this kind of game, and frequently with great success. An officer climbing to the top of the rocks with his gun, in the neighbourhood of the post-house, shot two enormous bears, and in the course of an hour carried off their skins in triumph on the top of his palanquin. The bearers of adventurous characters, such as the one just named, have sometimes to convey extraordinary kinds of luggage, or the human traveller is accompanied by four-footed friends as outside passengers. An officer, going down *dák* to Calcutta from Bhurtpore, carried a young tiger in a cage strapped upon the roof of his vehicle, a ravenous attendant,

which made sad havoc amongst the few fowls, sole tenants of the farm-yard of the not overpaid official who acts as *khansamah* at these scantily-furnished hotels. Animals of smaller dimensions, and less-devouring propensities, such as civet-cats, porcupines, &c., journey very safely and quietly in this manner, and the bearers never object to such an addition to the party. Without daring the terrors of the wild forests of Rajmhal, the visitors to Seeta-coond may form a very lively idea of the savage nature of their fastnesses, the rocky jungle, whose deep ravines are surrounded by unfathomable woods.

The neighbourhood of Monghyr is in a very high state of cultivation; and though tigers are to be found by those who seek them in their native haunts, they rarely presume to make their appearance in the inhabited districts. The roads are kept in good order; and the drives, especially that to Seeta-coond, exceedingly picturesque. Part of the way winds through narrow valleys enclosed on either side by rocky elevations, feathered from the summit to the base, the lofty tara palm trees springing above the rest, beautifully defined against the rich crimson of an eastern sky. On one or two of these eminences, a splendid mansion spreads its

white wings, adding architectural beauty to the sylvan scenery.

In the cold season, Monghyr may be truly denominated a paradise, since there is nothing at other periods save the heat of the climate to detract from its enchantments. On the frontiers of Bengal and Behar, and scarcely belonging to either, the district in which it stands, and which is known by the natives under the name of Jungleterry, partakes of the characteristics of the lower and the upper country; the verdure of Bengal lingers on the borders of Hindostan proper, while the low flat plains of the former yield to the undulations which diversify the high table-land stretching to the Himalaya, and which is intersected by numerous valleys or ravines, presenting passes full of romantic beauty.

Splendour of scenery, in a country in which, during many months of the year, its enjoyment must be confined to a short period, morning and evening, before the sun has risen and after it has set, does not compensate for the absence of society, the only gratification which can render India tolerable to those who have no absorbing pursuit; and consequently Monghyr is more desired as a temporary than a settled residence. Travellers, or visitors upon duty, who only see the brightest side

of the picture, are charmed with the beauty of the landscape, and the gaiety of the native groups which give animation to the scene. It is a delightful place for a standing camp, affording delicious shade for canvas habitations, and shelter from those piercing winds which, sweeping over bare plains, are so severely felt in tents, which have not any security against their force.

A civilian, accompanied by his family, in the tour of his district, took possession of a beautiful spot in the neighbourhood of Monghyr. According to the Eastern custom, he was attended by a numerous train of dependents, whose establishments, together with his own, occupied a considerable space of ground. Amongst the domestic pets belonging to his family was a grey, black-faced monkey, with long arms and a long tail, which, on account of his mischievous propensities, was always kept chained to a post on which the hut which defended him from the inclemency of the weather was erected. One morning the wife of the civilian, who frequently amused herself with watching the antics of this animal, observed another monkey of the same species playing with the prisoner; she instantly sent round to the people in the camp to inquire whose monkey (for there are frequently

several attached to one household) had got loose, and to desire that it might be instantly chained up. She was told that no one had brought a monkey with them, and that the creature which she had seen must be a stranger from the woods. An interesting scene now took place between the new acquaintance. After much jabbering and chattering, the wild monkey arose to go, and finding that his friend did not accompany him, returned, and taking him round the neck, urged him along: he went willingly the length of the chain, but then, prevented by stern necessity, he paused. In the course of a short time, the strange monkey seemed to comprehend the cause of his friend's detention, and grasping the chain, endeavoured to break it; the attempt was unsuccessful, and after several ineffectual efforts, both sate down in the attitude which the natives of India seem to have borrowed from these denizens of the woods, and making many piteous gesticulations, appeared to wring their hands and weep in despair. Night closed upon the interview, but the next day it was renewed, and now the monkey community was increased to three. Desirous to know where these creatures came from, the lady made inquiries of the natives of the place; but they unanimously

agreed in declaring, that there was not, to their knowledge, a monkey tope belonging to the same species within a hundred miles. The most eager desire was manifested by the new comers to release the prisoner from his bondage: at first, as upon the former occasion, the arts of persuasion were tried; force was next resorted to, and, in the end, doleful exclamations, jabbering of the most pathetic description, and tears.

On the following day, four or five monkeys made their appearance, and many were the discussions which appeared to take place between them; they tried to drag the captive up a tree, but the cruel chain still interposing, they seemed completely at their wits' end, uttering piercing lamentations, or so roughly endeavouring to effect a release, as to endanger the life of their friend. Pleased with the affectionate solicitude displayed by these monkeys, and sympathizing in their disappointment, the lady, after having amused herself for a considerable period by watching their manœuvres, ordered one of the servants to let the monkey loose. The moment the party perceived that his freedom was effected, their joy was unbounded; embracing him many times, they gambolled and capered about with delight, and finally, seizing the emancipated

prisoner by the arm, ran off with him to the woods, and were never seen again, not one of the same species appearing during the time the party remained in camp; thus corroborating the evidence of the natives, who persisted in declaring, that grey, black-faced monkeys, with long arms, were not inhabitants of the district.

A circumstance, somewhat similar, and equally authentic, which took place on the Madras side of India, related to the writer by an officer of rank to whom it occurred, may amuse those who take an interest in inquiring into the habits and manners of a race which, together with the conformation, seem to partake of the caprices and inconsistencies of man. Near to the bungalow in which the officer resided, and which had been newly erected in a jungly district, a troop of monkeys were in the habit of crossing the road daily, on their way to the neighbouring woods. On one of these occasions, a sepoy, perceiving the amusement which they afforded to his officer, caught a young one, and brought it to the house, where it remained fastened to one of the pillars of the verandah. The parents of this monkey were soon perceived to take up a position on a ledge of rocks opposite, but at some distance, where they could obtain a view of

their imprisoned offspring, and there they sate all day, sometimes apparently absorbed in silent despair, at others breaking out into paroxysms of grief. This lasted for a long time; days passed away without reconciling the parents to their loss; the same scene was enacted, the same sorrow evinced; and being of a compassionate disposition, the young officer took pity upon the misery of the bereaved pair, and gave his captive liberty. Anticipating the contemplation of the greatest delight at the meeting, he looked out to the rock whither the young monkey instantly repaired, but instead of the happy reunion which his fancy had painted, a catastrophe of the most tragic nature ensued. Seizing the truant in their arms, the old monkeys tore it to pieces in an instant; thus destroying at once the pleasurable sensations of the spectator, and perplexing him with vain conjectures whether, irritated by their previous distress, they had avenged themselves upon its cause, or whether, in the delirium of their joy, they had too roughly caressed the object of their lamentations. Having committed this strangely cruel act, the monkeys took their departure.

Amid the interesting places in the neighbourhood of Monghyr, the celebrated rock of Jungheera

must not be omitted. It consists of several masses of grey granite, rising boldly from the river. It is supposed to have formerly been a point of land projecting from the shore, but it is now completely isolated by the violence of the current, which rushes down in the rainy season with extraordinary vehemence and rapidity. Trees have imbedded their roots amid the crevices of this picturesque rock, and on its terraces several small temples are erected, adding much to the romantic beauty of the scene. It has been during many ages considered one of the most sacred places in the Ganges, and is a great resort of Hindoo devotees, who crowd to it, not only on account of its reputed sanctity, but to offer their homage at the shrine of Narayan, an idol of great celebrity at this place, whose figure, besides being preserved in one of the pagodas, is sculptured upon several parts of the rock, together with those of Vishnu, Seeva, and Sirooj. Jungheera is inhabited by Hindoo fakeers, who are not above asking charity of the European voyagers on the river, but who will not condescend to accept copper money from them. Passing Jungheera in the rains, when the Ganges runs roaring through the rocks with great noise and violence, a sensation of danger is added to the sublimity of the landscape; but when

the river is low, and its turbulence has abated, nothing can be more calm and lovely than the scene.

Between the two rocks, there is a ghaut or landing-place, gently sloping into the water, and never without a cluster of those graceful figures, which in this picturesque country form themselves so readily into groupes, such as artists delight to sketch, a sort of *tableaux vivans*, which must be vainly sought amidst the peasantry of England. From this ghaut the ascent to the summit is by flights of steps cut out of the solid rock. In the temple, which crowns this height, the principal fakeer is usually to be seen, sitting on a tiger-skin by way of carpet, and having the skull of one of these animals by his side.

According to the rules of their order, this begging fraternity are very scantily clothed, their greatest claims to sanctity resting upon the voluntary abandonment of the luxuries and comforts of life. The contempt which they profess for all domestic accommodation, is, however, very inconsistent with their known propensity to accumulate worldly treasure. It is no secret in the neighbourhood, that the chief of the fakeers, who, covered with dirt and ashes, seems to have relinquished every vanity, is the proprietor of a considerable estate, and the

possessor of numerous flocks and herds. It is shrewdly suspected that these self-denying ascetics do not spend their whole time upon the rock of Jungheera, but that there are seasons in which they indemnify themselves for the penances which they undergo, in order to secure the veneration of an ignorant multitude. The disguise of chalk, long matted locks disfigured with dirt, and untrimmed beards, renders it easy for three or four confederates to personate one fakeer, relieving guard at stated intervals, and when off duty enjoying all the delights which money can purchase. The same person apparently may be seen always sitting in the same posture, neither eating, drinking, or smoking, and with nothing but the boughs of a tree to shelter him from the inclemencies of the season; and yet these privations, sustained only at stated times by one of several individuals, may be extremely light. But, though an immense number of hypocrites are to be found amongst these people, there are many Hindoo devotees, who really and truly encounter the most frightful hardships for the sake of a reward hereafter.

At a considerable distance below Jungheera, there are other rocks which attract the attention of the voyager; they are profusely sculptured and

fringed to their bases with wild creepers, and the overhanging garlands of the trees, which spring from every fissure. The projecting points of Colgong and Patergotta form a beautiful bay at this place; the amphitheatre of hills, gleaming like amethysts in the sun-set, and the small wooded islands, which rise in fairy beauty upon the glittering surface of Ganges, present a scene of loveliness, which it is scarcely possible to behold unmoved.

But there are objects of utility, as well as of beauty, to interest the traveller, whose destiny leads him to the neighbourhood of Monghyr. Above, on the opposite bank of the Ganges, a work has been constructed, which has excited the admiration of all who are capable of appreciating the importance of the benefit which it has conferred. The zillah or province of Sarun, during many ages, enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most fertile tracts in the British territories, having had the name, common to all fruitful places, of "the garden of India," bestowed upon it. A melancholy change, however, took place, in consequence of the encroachments of the river Gunduck, which undermined the dyke, and at length carried it away. This calamity threatened the destruction of a fair and populous district; for, too frequently, extensive

tracts of valuable land were inundated by the rising of the river, which on its reflux left nothing but barren wastes covered with sand, and hillocks alike unfitted for agricultural or pastoral occupation. The inhabitants, driven from their employments, forsook their villages, and for many miles the country presented nothing but waste and devastation. In the early part of 1830, the supreme government determined upon arresting the devastating encroachments of the river, and Captain Sage, the executive officer of the division, was directed to construct a dyke, or bund, for the security of the adjacent country. He commenced his operations in the middle of April in the same year, and on the nineteenth of the following June had completed his undertaking, along a distance of ninety-two miles two furlongs and fifty-seven yards. The bund is in its average dimensions forty-five feet wide at the base, ten in width at the top, and nine feet in height, forming an elevated road, on which carriages of any description may safely be driven. Another cross bund, supplied with sixteen sluices for the purpose of irrigation, was completed after the rains by the same indefatigable officer, who, under a burning sun, in the hottest season of the year, accomplished a work which would have done

credit to the genius of Holland. No fewer than 19,489 men were employed daily in this undertaking; and strict personal superintendence was necessary to secure their effectual co-operation. The merit of the design also belongs to Captain Sage; and in the opinion of competent judges, the solidity of the construction is such as to defy the utmost force of the river for many ages to come.

Agriculture, as well as manufactures, flourishes in the neighbourhood of Monghyr; grain of all kinds, sugar, and indigo are in great abundance, and the country is celebrated for its opium. Immense fields of poppies, which, though they have been not unjustly described as all glare and stench, have a gay appearance, their flowers varying in colours, like the tulip or the anemone, and changing with every breeze that sweeps across them, render part of the cultivated district one wide parterre. Cotton plantations abound; the paths are strewed with pods full to bursting, which disclose the soft treasure within, appearing like a lump of wool intermixed with a few black seeds: the blossom of the cotton plant is very pretty, somewhat resembling that of the gum cistus, but of a pale yellow. There are also large tracts of indigo, a dark green shrubby plant; the neighbourhood of a factory

being always indicated by the appearance of the lower order of natives employed in it. The name given to them, that of *leel wallahs* (blue fellows), is very characteristic and appropriate, for they are literally blue; the few clothes which they wear are dyed of that colour, and so are their skins, which seem to take the tint very easily. The contrast between the steel-coloured and the copper-coloured brethren has a very droll effect. There are gardens of the betel-nut and sugar-plantations in this part of the country, and though the coco-tree has almost disappeared, its place in the landscape is supplied by the date and tara palm. Cocos are not supposed to grow luxuriantly except in the vicinity of the coast; but their cultivation in many inland situations in India shews that a little care alone is necessary for their introduction into the most remote parts of Hindostan. Nothing can be more beautiful than the effect produced by their magnificent coronals, when intermixed with the foliage of other trees.

The coco-nut tree is reverenced and esteemed sacred in India, on account of its utility. It affords nutritious food and several kinds of beverage. When green, its fruit is excellent stewed; and when not eaten alone, slices enter into the compo-

sition of kaaries, and other made dishes: no one can have an idea of the flavour and delicacy of a coco-nut, who has only tasted it in the hard dry state in which it is brought to Europe. The milk from the freshly-gathered fruit is delicious. Vinegar is manufactured, and spirits distilled, from the juice of the palm-tree; the oil it yields is unrivalled in excellence; its leaves plaited are employed in making the walls and covering in the roofs of native cottages, and the fibres are twisted into cables, or, when finely picked, used for the stuffing of mattresses, cotton being esteemed too warm and soft for the climate. The coco-nut, either whole or in slices, always enters into the offerings made to the deities, whose shrines occur in the district where it grows. Graceful girls may be seen, carrying a small tray of polished brass, on which spices, fragrant flowers, and slices of the coco-nut are laid, intended for the altar of Mahadeva, or some equally-venerated object of their worship. The same honours do not appear to be paid to the bamboo, although it is, if possible, more important than the coco-nut, being used for scaffoldings, enclosures, houses, ladders, masts, oars, poles of every kind, and almost every sort of furniture.

There is no resident clergyman at Monghyr;

but it is occasionally visited by the district chaplains, and a baptist missionary has an establishment, where public worship is constantly performed. At the visit of Bishop Heber, the congregation did not exceed sixty persons, of which three only were natives: a proof of the difficulty attending conversion in India, since nothing can be more fervent than the zeal which Christian missionaries bring to their endeavours.

The bank of the Ganges opposite to Monghyr has not the slightest pretensions to beauty; its low, flat, swampy shores, intersected with reedy islets, are the haunts of multitudes of alligators, which, in the hot season, may be seen sunning themselves by the side of the huge ant-hills erected upon the sand-banks, appearing above the surface of the water. Some of these animals attain to a prodigious size; they are exceedingly difficult to kill, in consequence of the adamantine armour in which the greater part of their bodies is cased. Even when the balls penetrate less guarded points, they are so tenacious of life as to cause a great deal of trouble before they can be finally despatched. One, which had received eight balls, and was supposed to be dead, after having been tied to the bamboo of a budgerow for a whole day, exhibited in the evening

so much strength and fierceness, as to be a dangerous neighbour. Many of these monsters are fifteen feet long, and they swim fearlessly past the boats, lifting up their terrific heads, and raising their dark bodies from the water as they glide along. Though not so frequently as in former times, when the echoes of the river were less disturbed by the report of fire-arms, natives are still the victims of that species of alligator, which lies in wait for men and animals, venturing incautiously too near their haunts. In many that have been killed, the silver ornaments worn by women and children, have been found, a convincing proof of the fearful nature of their prey.

An alligator, it is said, will sometimes make a plunge amidst a group of bathers at a ghaut, and, singling out one of the party, dart into the middle of the stream, defying pursuit by the rapidity of its movements against the current, through which it will fly with the velocity of an arrow, and having reached deep water it sinks with its victim into the abysses of the river. Eye-witnesses have given very frightful descriptions of the cruelty practised upon the unfortunate creatures fated to become the prey of these savage monsters. It is said that the alligator will play with its victim like a cat with a

mouse, tossing it into the air, and catching it again in its jaws, before the final dispatch; and persons standing at a ghaut have witnessed this horrid spectacle, when one of their juvenile companions have been carried away without a chance of rescue. Probably, however, the alligator is obliged by its peculiar conformation to adopt this mode of swallowing its food: when it has captured one of the finny tribe, the fish is always seen to flash far above the water before it descends into the capacious jaws opened to receive it.

Sportsmen, the younger portion especially, delight in waging war against these giants of the stream, as they lie wallowing in the mud in shallow places, and presenting the defenceless parts of their bodies to the marksman. In the Sunderbunds, where the creeks and natural canals of the Ganges wind through the forest, whose margin almost mingles with the stream, alligators are sometimes engaged in deadly encounters with the tiger. A battle of this kind witnessed by a missionary is described to have been a drawn one, for although the tiger succeeded in dragging his unwieldy adversary into the jungle, after the lapse of an hour or two the alligator was seen to emerge, and to regain

the water, not very materially injured by the conflict it had sustained.

The natives of Monghyr are a quiet, industrious race, rarely participating in the crimes which are so frequently perpetrated in the upper and lower country, neither addicted to the lawless proceedings, the onslaughts, murders, and highway-robberies often committed in open day by the warlike tribes of Hindostan, nor to the petty thefts, forgeries, burglaries, and sundry kinds of knavery, so common amidst the more artful and more timid Bengalees. Like all other natives, they are exceedingly litigious, and the attention of the public courts is taken up by suits of the most frivolous nature.

A civilian of rank, marching through the district, upon entering the breakfast tent, at the place of encampment for the day, was surprised by a very extraordinary apparition. An old woman, so withered and so wild in her attire as scarcely to seem to belong to humanity, was squatted in the corner. Rising up at his approach, she began to exclaim, or rather to scream out at the top of her voice, with all the fervour and volubility which mark her sex and country, a most unintelligible harangue, which the servants, who looked rather

conscious, attempted to stop by vociferating "*Choop! choop!*" (silence!) and by an endeavour to eject her from the tent. The judge, however, insisted upon hearing her story; and becoming a little calm, she stated that her ancestors had ruined themselves by defending their right to a certain tree, which grew upon the boundaries of two estates; that judgment had been given and reversed many times, and that she, having carried on the suit in her own person, had obtained a decree, the fifteenth given, in her favour, and that now that she was absolutely reduced to poverty, with nothing but the possession of the tree to console her for the loss of the land, which had been sold to establish her right to it, the Saib's *khidmutgars*, requiring wood to boil water in a tea-kettle, had cut down this identical tree with their sacrilegious hands. The men, in vindication, stated that it was a stunted pollard, absolutely worthless, and fit only for firewood, a fact which they proved by incontestable evidence. Nevertheless, the old woman persisted in demanding justice, told her story over and over again, aggravating at each time the magnitude of the injury she had sustained, demanding many hundred rupees as a compensation; and finally, the judge, having ascertained that the woman's state-

ment was true, and that her family had been ruined in consequence of repeated legal contests for the property, sent her off with a gold mohur, the highest price which our friend had ever paid for a bundle of sticks.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BABA LOGUE.

It is possible to penetrate into the drawing-room of a mansion in England without being made aware that the house contains a troop of children, who, though not strictly confined to the nursery, seldom quit it except when in their best dresses and best behaviours, and who, when seen in any other part of the house, may be considered in the light of guests. It is otherwise in India. Traces of the *babá logue*, the Hindoostanee designation of a tribe of children, are to be discovered the instant a visitor enters the outer verandah; a rocking-horse, a small cart, a wheeled chair, in which the baby may take equestrian or carriage exercise within doors, generally occupy conspicuous places, and probably—for Indian domestics are not very scrupulous respecting the proprieties in appearances—a line may be stretched across, adorned with a dozen or so of little muslin frocks, washed out hastily to supply the demand in some extraordinarily sultry day.

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From the threshold to the deepest recesses of the interior, every foot of ground is strewed with toys of all sorts and dimensions, and from all parts of the world—English, Dutch, Chinese, and Hindostanee. In a family blessed with numerous olive branches, the whole house is converted into one large nursery; drawing-rooms, ante-rooms, bed-rooms, and dressing-rooms, are all peopled by the young fry of the establishment. In the first, a child may be seen sleeping on the floor, under a musquito-net, stretched over an oval bamboo frame, and looking like a patent wire dish-cover; in the second, an infant of more tender years reposes on the arms of a bearer, who holds the baby in a manner peculiar to India, lying at length on a very thin mattrass, formed of several folds of thick cotton cloth, and croaking a most lugubrious lullaby, as he paces up and down; in a third, two or more of the juveniles are assembled, one with its only garment converted into leading-strings, another sitting under a punkah, and a third running after a large ball, with a domestic trotting behind, and following the movements of the child in an exceedingly ludicrous manner.

Two attendants, at the least, are attached to each of the children; one of these must always be

upon duty, and the services of the other are only dispensed with while at meals; an *ayah* and a *bearer* are generally employed, the latter being esteemed the best and most attentive nurse of the two. These people never lose sight of their respective charges for a single instant, and seldom permit them to wander beyond arms' length; consequently, in addition to the company of the children, that of their domestics must be endured, who seem to think themselves privileged persons; and should the little master or miss under their care penetrate into the bed-chamber of a visitor—no difficult achievement, where all the doors are open—they will follow close and make good their entrance also. It is their duty to see that the child does not get into any mischief, and as they are certain of being severely reprehended if the little urchin should happen to tumble down and hurt itself, for their own sakes they are careful to prevent such a catastrophe at any personal inconvenience whatever to their master's guests. When the children are not asleep, they must be amused, an office which devolves upon the servants, who fortunately take great delight in all that pleases the infant mind, and never weary of their employment. They are a little too apt to resort to a very favourite me-

thod of beguiling time, that of playing on the *tom-tom*, an instrument which is introduced into every mansion tenanted by the *baba logue* for the ostensible purpose of charming the young folks, but in reality to gratify their own peculiar taste. An almost constant drumming is kept up from morning until night, a horrid discord, which, on a very hot day, aggravates every other torment. The rumbling and squeaking of a low cart, in which a child is dragged for hours up and down a neighbouring verandah, the monotonous ditty of the old bearer, of which one can distinguish nothing but *baba*, added to the incessant clamour of the *tom-tom*, to say nothing of occasional squalls, altogether furnish forth a concert of the most hideous description.

Nevertheless, the gambols of children, the ringing glee of their infant voices, and the infinite variety of amusement which they afford, do much towards dispelling the *ennui* and *tedium* of an Indian day. The climate depresses their spirits to a certain point; they are diverting without being troublesome, for there is always an attendant at hand to whom they may be consigned should they become unruly; and certainly, considering how much they are petted and spoiled, it is only doing

Anglo-Indian children justice to say, that they are, generally speaking, a most orderly race. There can scarcely be a prettier sight than that of a groupe of fair children, gathered round or seated in the centre of their dark-browed attendants, listening with eager countenances to one of those marvellous legends, of which Indian story-tellers possess so numerous a catalogue; or convulsed with laughter as they gaze upon the antics of some merry fellow, who forgets the gravity and dignity considered so becoming to a native, whether Moslem or Hindoo, in his desire to afford entertainment to the *baba logue*. In one particularly well-regulated family, in which the writer happened to be a temporary inmate, a little boy anxiously expressed a wish that we would go very early to a ball which was to take place in the evening, because, he said, he and his brothers were to have a *dhole*, and the bearers had promised to dance for them. A *dhole* is an instrument of forty-drum-power; fortunately, both children and servants had the grace to reserve it for their own private recreation, and doubtless, for that night at least, the jackalls were scared from the door.

The dinner for the children is usually served up at the same time with the tiffin placed before the

seniors of the family. The young folks sit apart, accommodated with low tables, and arm-chairs of correspondent size; and as they are usually great favourites with all the servants, it is no uncommon thing to see the whole *posse* of *khidmutgars* desert their master's chairs to crowd round those of the *babas*. One of the principal dishes at the juvenile board is denominated *pish pash*, weak broth thickened with rice, and a fowl pulled to pieces; another, called *dhāl baat*, consists of rice and yellow peas stewed together; *croquettes*, a very delicate preparation of chicken, beaten in a mortar, mixed up with fine batter, and fried in egg-shaped balls, is also very common; and there is always a *kaaree*. Europeans entertain only one notion respecting a curry, as they term the favourite Indian dish, and which they suppose to be invariably composed of the same ingredients, a rich stew, highly seasoned, and served with rice. There are, however, infinite varieties of the *kaaree* tribe; that which is eaten by the natives differing essentially from that produced at European tables; while there is a distinct preparation for children, and another for dogs: rice and turmeric are the constant accompaniments of all, but with respect to the other articles employed, there is a very wide latitude, of which the native

cooks avail themselves, by concocting a kind peculiar to their own manufacture, which is not to be found at any table save that of the person whom they serve.

Captain Basil Hall assures us that the *kaaree* is not of Asiatic origin, and that the natives of India owe its introduction to the Portuguese; a startling assertion to those who are acquainted with the vehement objection to any innovation in dress or food entertained by Hindoos of all castes, and by the Moosulmans of this part of the world also, who are even less liberal than those of other countries. Nevertheless, it is an indisputable fact that, notwithstanding the prejudice which exists all over India against the adoption of foreign novelties, an exception has been made in favour of a few importations, which are now in universal request, and which even the best-informed natives can scarcely be made to believe were not indigenous to the soil, and entered as deeply into the household economy of their most remote ancestors as in their own at the present day. Tobacco, for instance, has found its way to every part of the Peninsula, and must have extended rapidly to the most remote places, immediately upon its introduction from Turkey or Persia, or by the early Portuguese colonists. The

chili, another American plant, is in almost equal esteem, and is to be purchased in all the native bazaars; while every class,—whether the staple food, as amongst the wealthy Moosulmans, be flesh, or cakes of flour, which latter compose the meal of the poorer orders dwelling in the upper provinces, or the boiled rice of the low grounds, —is invariably accompanied by *kaaree*, composed of vegetables mixed up with a variety of spices, and enriched, according to the means of the party, with *ghee*. *Chetney*, in all probability, was formerly used as the sauce to flavour the rice or flour-cakes, which, without some adjunct of the kind, must be extremely insipid; but the substitute offers a very superior relish, and as in its least elaborate state it is within the reach of the very poorest native, its invention and dissemination are actual benefits conferred upon the country. The *kaaree* for children is, of course, extremely simple, nor indeed are highly-seasoned dishes very frequently seen at European tables in the Bengal Presidency. They have nothing like the pepper-pot of the West-Indies, and it is rarely that the gastronome, delighting in the quintessence of spice, can be gratified by the productions of Indian cookery.

The *khana*, dinner of the *baba logue*, is washed down with pure water, and, in about an hour or two after its conclusion, preparations for the evening exercise commence. The children are to be bathed for the second, and re-attired perhaps for the tenth time in the day. In the hot weather, it is not until this hour that the slightest pains are considered necessary about the personal appearance of the young folks, who, until they are four or five years old, are permitted to go about the house during the earlier part of the day sometimes more than half-naked. In the evening, however, the toilette is a more serious affair; babies are decked out in their laced caps, and a pair of *pajamnas* (trowsers) are added to the frocks of their elder brothers and sisters, while those still more advanced in years are enrobed in their best suits, and flourish in ribbon-sashes and embroidered hems; but, excepting in the cold weather, there are no hats, bonnets, tippets, or gloves to be seen.

It is not often that parents accompany their children in the evening drive or walk; the latter are taken out by their attendants at least an hour before grown-up people choose to exhibit themselves in the open air. The equipages of the *baba logue* are usually kept expressly for their accom-

modation, and of a build and make so peculiar as to render them no very enviable conveyances for their seniors: palanquin-carriages of all sorts and descriptions, drawn by one horse or a pair of bullocks, in which the children and the servants squat together on the floor; common palanquins, containing an infant of two or three years old, with its bearer; *taun jauns*, in which a female nurse is seated with a baby on her lap; together with miniature sociables, chaises, and shandrydans,—in short, every sort of vehicle adapted to the Lilliputian order, are put into requisition. Many of the little folk are mounted upon ponies; some of these equestrians are so young as to be unable to sit upon their steeds without the assistance of a *chuprassy* on each side, and a groom to lead the animal; others, older and more expert, scamper along, keeping their attendants, who are on foot, at full speed, as they tear across the roads, with heads uncovered and hair flying in the wind.

One of the prettiest spectacles afforded by the evening drive in Calcutta, is the exhibition of its juvenile inhabitants, congregated on a particular part of the plain between the Government-house and the fort, by the side of the river. This is the chosen spot; all the equipages, a strange grotesque

medley, are drawn up at the corner, and the young people are seen, in crowds, walking with their servants, laughing, chattering, and full of glee, during the brief interval of enfranchisement. For the most part, they are pale, delicate little creatures; cherry-cheeks are wholly unknown, and it is only a few who can boast the slightest tinge of the rose. Nevertheless, there is no dearth of beauty; independent of feature, the exceeding fairness of their skins, contrasted with the Asiatic swarthiness around them, and the fairy lightness of their forms, are alone sufficient to render them exceedingly attractive. Not many number more than eight years, and perhaps in no other place can there be seen so large an assembly of children, of the same age and rank, disporting in a promenade. Before night closes in upon the gay crowd, still driving on the neighbouring roads, the juvenile population take their departure, and being disposed in their respective carriages, return home. At day-break, they make their appearance again, in equal numbers; but their gambols are *per-force* confined to the broad and beaten path; they dare not, as in Europe, disperse themselves over the green sward, nor enjoy the gratification of rolling and tumbling on the grass, filling their laps with wild flowers, and

pelting each other with showers of daisies. Their attendants keep a sharp look-out for snakes, and though these reptiles are sometimes seen gliding about in the neighbourhood, there is no record of an accident to the *baba logue* from their poisonous fangs.

Itinerant venders of toys take their station in the favourite haunt of their most liberal patrons, exhibiting a great variety of tempting articles, all bright and gaudy with gold and silver. These glittering wares are formed out of very simple materials, but a good deal of ingenuity is displayed in the construction: elephants more than a foot high, richly caparisoned, hollow, and made of paper, coloured to the life, with trunks which move about to the admiration of all the beholders, may be purchased for a few pice; nearly equally good imitations of budgerows and palanquins, also of paper, bear a still smaller price; there are, besides, cages containing brilliant birds of painted clay, suspended from the top bars by an almost invisible hair, and so constantly in motion as to be speedily demolished by cats, should they happen to hang within reach of their claws; magnificent cockatoos made of the pith of a plant which is turned to many purposes in India, and which in China is

manufactured into paper; to these, whirligigs and reptiles of wax, set in motion by the slightest touch, are added. The Calcutta toymen, though not equally celebrated, far surpass those of Benares in the accuracy of their representations of animate and inanimate objects; they work with more fragile materials, and their chief dependence being upon customers fond of novelties, they are constantly bringing new articles into the market. In the upper provinces, where the demand is less, European children are obliged to be content with the common toys of the bazaars; nondescripts carved in wood, fac-similes of those which pleased former generations, but which are discarded the instant that better commodities are offered for sale.

The popular evening-entertainment for children in Calcutta, juvenile balls not yet being established, is an exhibition of *fantoccini*, which goes by the name of a *kat pootlee nautch*. The showmen are of various grades, and exhibit their puppets at different prices, from a rupee upwards, according to the richness of their scenery and decorations. A large room in the interior is selected for the place of representation; a sheet stretched across between two pillars, and reaching within three feet of the ground, conceals the living performers from

view; there is a back scene behind this proscenium, generally representing the exterior of a palace of silver, and the entertainment commences with the preparations for a grand *durbar*, or levee, in which European ladies and gentlemen are introduced. The puppets are of a very grotesque and barbarous description, inferior to the generality of Indian handy-works, but they are exceedingly well-managed, and perform all their evolutions with great precision. Sofas and chairs are brought in for the company, who are seen coming to court, some on horseback, some on elephants, and some in carriages; their descent from these conveyances is very dexterously achieved; and the whole harlequinade of fighting, dancing, tiger-hunting, and alligator-slaying goes off with great *éclat*. The audience, however, forms the most attractive part of the spectacle. The youngest babies occupy the front rows, seated on the ground or in the laps of their nurses, who look very picturesque in the Eastern attitude, half-shadowed by their long flowing veils; beyond these scattered groupes, small arm-chairs are placed, filled with little gentry capable of taking care of themselves; and behind them, upon sofas, the mamas and a few female friends are seated, the rest of the room being

crowded with servants, male and female, equally delighted with the *baba logue* at the exploits of the wooden performers.

Generally, several of the native children belonging to the establishment are present, clad in white muslin chemises, with silver bangles round their wrists and ancles, their fine dark eyes sparkling with pleasure as they clap their little hands and echo the *wah! wah!* of their superiors. Many of these children are perfectly beautiful, and their admission into the circle adds considerably to the effect of the whole scene. The performances are accompanied by one or two instruments, and between the acts, one of the showmen exhibits a few of the common feats of sleight of hand accomplished with so much ease by the inferior orders of Indian jugglers.

There is another species of dramatic representation, in which the *baba logue* take especial delight. A man, a goat, and a monkey, comprise the *dramatis personæ;* the latter, dressed as a sepoy, goes through a variety of evolutions, aided by his horned and bearded coadjutor. The children—though from the constant repetition of this favourite entertainment they have the whole affair by heart, and could at any time enact the part of either of the

performers,—are never weary of listening to the monologue of the showman, and of gazing on the antics of his dumb associates. This itinerant company may be seen wandering about the streets of Calcutta all the morning; a small douceur to the durwan at the gate admits them into the compound, and the little folks in the verandah no sooner catch a glimpse of the mounted monkey, than they are wild for the rehearsal of the piece.

Time in India is not much occupied by the studies of the rising generation; an infant prodigy is a *rara avis* amongst the European community; for, sooth to say, the education of children is shockingly neglected; few can speak a word of English, and though they may be highly accomplished in Hindostanee, their attainments in that language are not of the most useful nature, nor, being entirely acquired from the instructions of the servants, particularly correct or elegant. Some of the *babas* learn to sing little Hindostanee airs very prettily, and will even *improvise* after the fashion of the native poets; but this is only done when they are unconscious of attracting observation, for the love of display, so injudiciously inculcated in England, has not yet destroyed the simplicity of Anglo-Indian children. The art in which, unhappily, quick and

clever urchins attain the highest degree of proficiency, is that of scolding. The Hindostanee vocabulary is peculiarly rich in terms of abuse; native Indian women, it is said, excel the females of every other country in volubility of utterance, and in the strength and number of the opprobrious epithets which they shower down upon those who raise their ire. They can declaim for five minutes at a time without once drawing breath; and the shrillness of their voices adds considerably to the effect of their eloquence.

This description of talent is frequently turned to account in a manner peculiar to India. Where a person conceives himself to be aggrieved by his superior in a way which the law cannot reach, he not unfrequently revenges himself upon his adversary, by hiring two old women out of the bazaar, adepts in scurrility, to sit on either side of his door. These hags possess a perfect treasury of foul words, which they lavish upon the luckless master of the house with the heartiest good-will, and without stint or limitation. Nor are their invectives confined to him alone; to render them the more poignant, all his family, and particularly his mother, are included; nothing of shame or infamy is spared in the accusations heaped upon her head;

a stainless character avails her not, since she is assailed merely to give a double sting to the malicious attacks upon her son. So long as these tirades are wasted upon the ears of the neighbours, they are comparately innocuous; but should they find their way to the tympanums against which they are directed, the unfortunate man is involved in the deepest and most irremediable disgrace; if he be once known to have heard it he is undone: consequently, for the preservation of his dignity, the object of this strange persecution keeps himself closely concealed in the most distant chamber of his house, and a troop of horse at his gate could not more effectually detain him prisoner than the virulent tongues of two abominable old women. The *chokeydars*, who act in the capacity of the *gendarmerie* of Europe, take no cognizance of the offence; the mortified captive is without a remedy, and must come to terms with the person whom he has offended, to rid himself of the pestilent effusions of his tormentors.

With such examples before their eyes,—for there is not a woman, old or young, in the compound, who could not exert her powers of elocution with equal success,—a great deal of care is necessary to prevent the junior members of a family from indulging

in the natural propensity to scold and call names. Spoiled and neglected children abuse their servants in an awful manner, using language of the most horrid description, while those parents who are imperfectly acquainted with Hindostanee are utterly ignorant of the meaning of the words which come so glibly from the tongues of their darlings.

In British India, children and parents are placed in a very singular position with regard to each other; the former do not speak their mother-tongue; they are certain of acquiring Hindostanee, but are very seldom taught a word of English until they are five or six years old, and not always at that age. In numerous instances, they cannot make themselves intelligible to their parents, it being no uncommon case to find the latter almost totally ignorant of the native dialect, while their children cannot converse in any other. Some ladies improve themselves by the prattle of their infants, having perhaps known nothing of Hindostanee until they have got a young family about them, an inversion of the usual order of things; the children, though they may understand English, are shy of speaking it, and do not, while they remain in India, acquire the same fluency which distinguishes their utterance of the native language. The only exceptions

occur in King's regiments, where of course English is constantly spoken, and the young families of the officers have ample opportunity of making themselves acquainted with their vernacular tongue in their intimate association with the soldiers of the corps. Under such tuition, purity of pronunciation, it may be supposed, would be wanting; but children educated entirely at the schools instituted in King's regiments, do not contract that peculiar and disagreeable accent which invariably characterizes the dialect of the country-born, and which the offspring of Europeans, if brought up in the academical establishments of Calcutta, inevitably acquire. The sons of officers who cannot afford to send their children to England for their education, often obtain commissions in their fathers' regiments, having grown up into manhood without quitting the land of their birth, and without having enjoyed those advantages which are supposed to be necessary to qualify them for their station in society; yet these gentlemen are not in the slightest degree inferior to their brother officers in their attainments in classic and English literature; in the latter, perhaps, they are even more deeply versed, since they can only obtain an acquaintance with many interesting circumstances relative to their father-

land through the medium of books; while they excel in Hindostanee, and are certain of being appointed to the interpreterships of the corps to which they belong. Clergymen's sons, also, do infinite credit to the instructions which they receive in India; and though it may be advisable for them to follow the general example, and finish their studies in Europe, it is not actually necessary; but without the advantages enjoyed by the parties abovementioned, it is scarcely possible to obtain even a decent education in India.

The climate is usually supposed to be exceedingly detrimental to European children after they have attained their sixth or seventh year; but vast numbers grow up into men and women without having sought a more genial atmosphere, and when thus acclimated, the natives themselves do not sustain the heat with less inconvenience. When the pecuniary resources of the parents leave them little hope of returning to Europe with their families, the accomplishments secured to the daughters by an English or French education, are dearly purchased by the alienation which must take place between them and their nearest relatives. If interest be wanting to obtain commissions in the King's or Company's service for the sons, boys must be sent

to seek their fortune at home, since there are very few channels for European speculation open in India. Indigo-factories form the grand resource for unemployed young men; but, generally speaking, family connexions in the mother-country offer better prospects. With the female branches of Anglo-Indian families it is different; the grand aim and object which their parents have in view is to get them married to men possessing civil or military appointments in India, and they consider the chances of so desirable a destiny materially increased by the attainment of a few showy and superficial accomplishments in some European seminary. In too many instances, the money thus bestowed must be entirely thrown away; young ladies, emancipated from the school-room at an early age, and perchance not acquainted with any society beyond its narrow limits, have only the name of an English education, and know little or nothing more than might have been acquired in India; others, who have enjoyed greater advantages, are in danger of contracting habits and prejudices in favour of their own country which may embitter a residence in India; and as it frequently happens that men of rank choose their wives from the dark daughters of the land, or are guided wholly by the eye, the

good to be derived scarcely counterbalances the great evil of long estrangement from the paternal roof.

The delight of Anglo-Indian parents in their children is of very brief duration, and miserably alloyed by the prospect of separation; the joy of the mother, especially, is subjected to many drawbacks; the health of the baby forms a source of unceasing anxiety from the moment of its birth. Infant life in the torrid zone hangs upon so fragile a thread, that the slightest ailment awakens alarm; the distrust of native attendants, sometimes but too well-founded, adds to maternal terrors, and where the society is small, the social meetings of a station are suspended, should illness, however slight, prevail amongst the *baba logue*. Where mothers are unable to nurse their own children, a native woman, or *dhye*, as she is called, is usually selected for the office, Europeans being difficult to be procured; these are expensive and troublesome appendages to a family; they demand high wages on account of the sacrifice which they affect to make of their usual habits, and the necessity of purchasing their reinstatement to caste, forfeited by the pollution they have contracted, a prejudice which the Mussulmans have acquired from their Hindoo asso-

ciates. Their diet must be strictly attended to, and they are too well aware of their importance not to make their employers feel it: in fact, there is no method in which natives can so readily impose upon the European community as that in which their children are concerned. The dearest article of native produce is asses'-milk, in consequence of its being recommended by medical men for the nutriment of delicate children; the charge is never less than a rupee per pint, and it frequently rises much higher. It is useless to add a donkey to the farmyard belonging to the establishment, in the hope of obtaining a regular and cheaper supply; the expense of the animal's keep is enormous, and it is certain to become dry or to die in a very short time. Few servants refuse to connive at this knavery, and the same donkey may be purchased two or three times over by its original proprietor, and not an individual in the compound, though the fact may be notorious to all, will come forward to detect the cheat. It is a point of honour amongst them to conceal such delinquencies, and they know that if asses'-milk be required for the *baba*, it will be purchased at any price.

Notwithstanding the extreme terror with which attached parents regard the hour which is to se-

parate them from their children, their greatest anxiety is to secure for them the advantages of an European education, and in almost every instance those who remain in India are only kept there in consequence of pecuniary embarrassments. The misery of parting with beloved objects seems even less severe than that of retaining them under so many circumstances supposed to be adverse to their advancement in life; and the danger of entrusting them to unamiable or incompetent persons in England, appears to be nothing compared to the wretchedness of seeing them grow up under their own eyes, without the means of acquiring those branches of polite learning deemed indispensable by ambitious mothers: numbers, who are too completely the offspring of the soil to require change of climate, are sent to England, in order that in accomplishments at least they may vie with their fairer associates.

It must be confessed that many difficulties are placed in the way of female instruction in India, and indeed it is only where a mother is qualified to take an active part in the tuition of her daughters that they can acquire more than the mere rudiments of education. The climate is unfavourable to occupation of this kind; English ladies soon

learn to fancy that it is impossible to exert themselves as they would have done at home; they speedily become weary of the task, and they have so many obstacles to contend against, in the Upper Provinces especially, where the necessary books cannot always be obtained, that only spirits of the most active nature can persevere. Calcutta offers more facilities; it possesses schools, although of a very inferior description, and private education may be carried on with the aid of masters, whose qualifications are quite equal to those which are to be found in some of the best provincial towns in England; but the climate of Bengal is unfortunately more trying to youthful constitutions than that of the higher districts; and at the first indication of declining health, parents take the alarm, and strain every nerve to procure the means of sending their children home. Not unfrequently the mother accompanies her young family, leaving the father thus doubly bereaved; the husband and wife are sometimes parted from each other for many years, where the latter is unwilling to relinquish the superintendence of her sons and daughters to other hands; but, in many cases, the lady spends the time in voyaging between England and India. Where there are funds to support the expense, the

wives of civil or military residents seem to think nothing of making the passage half a dozen times before they settle finally in one quarter of the globe; establishments which appear to be permanent are often broken up in an instant; some panic occurs; the mother flies with her children to another land, or, should it be convenient for the father to apply for his furlough, the whole family take their departure, leaving a blank in the society to which perchance they have contributed many pleasures.

Ladies who take their children home at a very early age, when the dangerous period has passed, sometimes venture the experiment of bringing out a governess to complete their education in India. The expedient is seldom successful; though bound in the heaviest penalties not to marry during a stipulated number of years, they cannot be kept to their engagements; the hand of the governess is often promised before the end of the voyage, and there is no chance of retaining her in the Upper Provinces; seclusion from society is found to be ineffectual, as it only serves to arouse the knight-errantry of the idle youth of the station; rich suitors pay at once the sum that is to be forfeited by previous agreement, and poor ones declare that

marriage cancels all such bonds, and defy the injured party to recover. Neither fortune nor connexion is much regarded in India in the choice of a wife; a few shewy accomplishments,—that of singing especially,—will always be preferred, and even where all these are wanting, gentlemen of high birth and suitable appointments will stoop very low: the European waiting-maid has as fair a chance as her young mistress of making the best match which the society can afford, and mortifying instances are of no unusual occurrence, in which a *femme de chambre* has carried off a prize from the belles of the most distinguished circle of the presidency.

With these melancholy facts before their eyes, it seems surprising that the heads of houses should ever burthen themselves with the care and responsibility which the addition of a governess to their families must always entail; the only chance they have of retaining the services of a person in this capacity occurs when the choice has fallen on some well-conducted woman, who is separated from her husband, and desirous of obtaining an asylum in a foreign land.

The eagerness with which females of European birth are usually sought in marriage in India is the

cause of the depressed state of the schools in Calcutta. No sooner is a lady to whom mothers would gladly entrust their children established as a schoolmistress, than she is induced to exchange the troubles and anxieties attendant upon her situation for a more desirable home. If men of rank should not offer, rich tradesmen are always to be found in the list of suitors; and where pride does not interfere, the superior wealth of many individuals of this class renders them equally eligible for the husbands of unportioned women. The bride deserts her charge for more sacred duties, and the school falls into incompetent hands. Owing to these adverse circumstances, few female pupils who have European mothers living, are to be found in any of the establishments for their education in Calcutta: but where there is an adequate provision for the maintenance of the child, private seminaries have hitherto been preferred to the Orphan School at Kidderpore; an institution which, under the zealous superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Hovenden, made rapid strides in improvement. The death of this gentleman, whose whole heart was engaged in the plans which he formed for the advantage of the youthful community placed under his direction, must long be severely felt; but from his

judicious arrangements, the establishment cannot fail to derive lasting benefit; and in the present spread of intellect, we may hope that in the course of a few years a still better system may be introduced at Kidderpore, and that other schools may spring up, in which every advantage of education may be obtained without the necessity of a voyage to Europe.

CHAPTER V.

OUDE.

THE fate of the kingdom of Oude seems now verging to a crisis, and, in all probability, a short period will decide whether it is to continue under the mismanagement of its present rulers, or be placed entirely under the control of the British Government. At the present period, Lucknow affords an almost perfect realization of the *beau ideal* of the court of an Asiatic despot, though the power over life and limb has been somewhat abridged by the presence of the British Resident.

In natural advantages, the kingdom of Oude does not yield to any part of India. The whole surface of the province is level, and watered by numerous streams; and the land, when properly cultivated, is exceedingly productive, affording rich crops of every sort of grain, cotton, sugar, indigo, opium, and all the most valuable products of Hindostan. The gifts of Heaven have, however, been neutralized by the ruinous policy of an oppressive

government. "The impression, which generally remained uppermost," observes the writer of a private letter,* dated in December last, "as the general result of our visit to Lucknow, was that of disgust. In a state in which the people have no voice, in respect of the amount or kind of taxation, or as to the disposal of the revenue raised, every sort of improvement must depend upon the ruling power. Every where we saw proofs of the frivolity of the amusements of the sovereign, and of the lavish expense at which they are gratified; no where could we perceive any public work in progress for the benefit of the community. Along one entire side of this extensive and populous capital runs the river Goomtee, over which there is not a single bridge; that which was commenced being left unfinished. What *might* not be done in this kingdom! It has no national debt, and if there be truth in reports generally believed, it has stores of wealth, though secretly hoarded. But even if these rumours be groundless, it is known that the present annual revenue, without reviving an old, or imposing a new tax, is fully adequate to meet all proper demands for the state and splendour of the

* Addressed to the Editor of *The Calcutta Literary Gazette*, and forwarded by him to the writer of this work.

sovereign, the maintenance of efficient judicial and fiscal establishments, and for carrying forward works of improvement and of utility. It is sad to say, that whatever the public servants do not peculate, and put by in secret, against times of need and difficulty, to themselves, is squandered by the dominant authority in vain and frivolous amusements, in the pursuits of a weak mind, and a vitiated taste, and the indulgence of depraved habits. Although his servants bow down their necks to the royal person, he has little or no voice in the management of the affairs of the country, and the sin of misrule must rest upon the head of his chosen minister.

" In the short space between Cawnpore and Lucknow, as well as from appearances immediately around the capital, I was disposed to think the tales of mal-administration exaggerated. The reverse, however, became but too obvious each stage we proceeded, by the way of Seetapore, to Shahjehanpore. We passed over miles and miles of waste in succession, not of barren land, incapable of cultivation, —for the fertility of the soil was manifest in many places, and traces of former tillage plainly discernible; such as ridges dividing fields; wells for irrigation, now dilapidated and useless, and groves of mango-trees, far remote from present habitations;

—but evincing that these parts of the country had once been populous. Where the soil is naturally so rich, where so much facility for irrigation exists, as well in the nearness of water to the surface, as in the numerous small streams running from the mountains to unite themselves with the Ganges, it seems impossible to trace the mournful waste and depopulation to any other source than that of impolitic and unjust administration. This cause alone was assigned by all those with whom I conversed on the subject,—and they were of all classes, such as officials now in employ, or who had been employed under former ministers, cultivators, shop-keepers, pensioned sepoys, chokeydars, &c.,—they all declared that oppressive taxation occasioned this melancholy state of things; that it was the same whether an *aumil* (agent) or a renter farmed; that no faith was kept; that the rent assessed was merely nominal, there being no limit to the demand, except the degree of means and power to enforce it. This it was which drove the stronger *malgoozars* (landholders) into resistance, and forced the weaker to fly the country. It is a matter for surprise that any cultivators remain: but the tenacity with which this class cling to their homes is notorious, and it is probable, indeed, that the very lowest grade of the

people,—the ryots,—suffer least, because oppression falls principally on the chiefs of villages; while it is certain that the custom of paying rent in kind by *buttai*, which prevails uniformly in Oude, is beneficial to the mere ryot. In our provinces, money-rents, fixed without advertence to fluctuation of prices, and adhered to for several successive years, have much injured our cultivators.

"At no time, and on no occasion, did I ever feel more proud of being in the service of the British Indian Government, than on recrossing within its frontier. After having travelled through a wilderness, we passed the small stream called Sooketa, which divides Oude from our territory, and is not more than ten yards wide. Up to this point we scarcely saw a tilled field;—from it, all the way to Shahjehanpore, about four coss, we gazed upon one vast sheet of rich cultivation, wheat, barley, *urhur* (a species of rye), grain of all kinds, cotton, sugar-cane, &c.;—the road bounded by banks or ditches; in short, every indication of industry, prosperity, and security. There is no perceptible change in the nature of the soil, nor is any thing changed, in fact, except the ruling power."

The unfinished bridge intended to span the

Goomtee, mentioned in the foregoing remarks, was a project of Saadut Ali, the late sovereign; it was to have been of iron, and the materials had arrived from England; but the death of the monarch taking place before they could be employed for the intended purpose, his successor, imbibing the prejudice common in Hindoostan, that no luck can attend the completion of an undertaking thus arrested in its progress, suffered the design to fall to the ground. There is, however, or at least there was, a bridge of solid masonry across the Goomtee, at Lucknow, besides one of platformed boats, that in the centre being moveable and opened for an hour every day.

The king of Oude has kept up a greater degree of state than his more highly descended, but less fortunate, contemporary of Delhi; and, in fact, Lucknow is the only native court in Hindostan, which can afford any idea of the princely magnificence affected by the former rulers of India; that of Gwalior can bear no comparison, nor are those in the central provinces distinguished by the pomp and splendour which still characterize the throne of this ill-governed kingdom.

Like the generality of Indian cities, Lucknow presents a more imposing spectacle at a distance

than its interior can realize, though some of its buildings may bear a comparison with those of the most celebrated capitals in the world. When viewed from some commanding point, the city exhibits a splendid assemblage of minarets, cupolas, pinnacles, towers, turrets, and lofty arched gateways, through which, with many windings, the river glides, while the whole of this bright confusion of palace and temple, is shadowed and interspersed with the rich foliage of trees of gigantic growth and redundant luxuriance. But when visited in detail, the gorgeousness of the picture is obscured by the more than ordinary degree of dirt, filth, and squalid poverty, which are placed in juxta-position with its grandest feature: the lanes leading from the principal avenues are ankle-deep in mud; and many of the hovels, which afford an insufficient shelter to a swarming population, are the most wretched habitations that imagination can conceive. * *

The capital of Oude is divided into three quarters. The first is chiefly appropriated to the mercantile community attached to the court and the residency; this district is composed of narrow, dirty, and inconvenient streets, and with the exception of a chowk, or market-place, and one or two open

spaces occupied by the higher order of shopkeepers, the whole is mean beyond any comparison with the correspondent portions of other native cities. The population is immense, and the beggars quite as abundant as in places where mendicity is sanctioned by a higher degree of holiness than Lucknow can boast. Every corner of the streets is occupied by faqueers, whose stentorian voices are heard above the Babel-like dissonance of an Asiatic city. The second quarter which sprang up principally under the auspices of Saadut Ali, in addition to one exceedingly handsome street above a mile long, consists of a spacious chowk, and several well-appointed bazaars. It is entered at each end by a lofty gateway, and is composed of many palaces, and palace-like mansions, belonging to the king, and occupied by the members of his family, and the officers of his household. The architecture, though striking and picturesque, is rather whimsical, being an admixture of all sorts of orders and styles, Grecian and Moorish, diversified by modern innovations and alterations. The furniture of these houses is in the European style, and many contain a very curious and heterogeneous assemblage of upholsterer's goods, such as are seldom now to be seen in the countries which produced

them. The third and most interesting quarter is of a more purely Oriental character, and contains numerous splendid buildings, mosques, and royal residences, chiefly completed during the sovereignty of Asoph-ud-Dowlah, who, upon his accession to the throne, quitted Fyzabad, the former capital of Oude, and fixed the seat of his government at Lucknow. The palace, which faces the Goomtee, comprises six principal courts or quadrangles, surrounded by pavilion-like buildings. In the first of these, which is entered by two lofty gateways, the attendants of the court have their apartments. Over the outer-gate there is a handsome chamber, called the Nobut Khana, or music-room, forming an orchestra upon a very splendid scale. The second court, encompassed by state apartments, is laid out as a garden, having a well, or bowlee, in the centre. Round this well are pavilions, opening to the water, and intended to afford a cool retreat during the hot weather; the air is refreshed by the constant dripping of the fountain, and the piazzas and arcaded chambers beyond, within the influence of its luxurious atmosphere, are well calculated for sleeping chambers in the sultry nights so constantly occurring throughout the period of the hot winds. Parallel

to the second court, and at the eastward of it, stands a splendid edifice, raised upon an arched terrace, entirely of stone. This fabric, which is called the Sungee Dalaun, contains a grand hall, surrounded with a double arcade, crowned with a cupola at each angle, and one over the principal front, all of copper doubly gilt. At the extremities of the terrace there are wings, and flower-gardens stretch along each front, divided into parterres by walks and fountains. A corridor extends round this court, planted with vines, and out of three entrances, one with a covered passage is appropriated to the ladies. These gateways are decked with gilded domes, and the mosque, zenana, and other buildings attached to the palace, give to the whole edifice the air of a city raised by some enchanter. Without entering farther into dry descriptive details, it may be sufficient to say, that in no place in India can there be a more vivid realization of visions conjured up by a perusal of the splendid fictions of the *Arabian Nights*. Those who have visited the Kremlin, have pronounced that far-famed edifice to be inferior to the Imambara; and the palaces of the Hyder Baugh, Hossein Baugh, and Seesa Mahal, have nearly equal claims to admiration.

The banks of the Goomtee are beautifully planted, and its parks and gardens rendered singularly attractive by the multitude of animals kept in them. At a suburban palace, European visitants are delighted with the novel sight of a herd of English cattle, their superior size, roundness of form, and sleek looks, offering a strong contrast to the smaller, humped, and dewlapped breeds of Hindostan: the latter are perhaps more picturesque, but the associations connected with cows bred in English meads, the numerous pastoral recollections which their unexpected appearance revive in the mind, render them, when viewed beneath the shade of the tamarinds and banians of a tropical clime, objects of deep and peculiar interest.

The menageries of Lucknow are very extensive, and besides those wild and savage animals kept for the purpose of assisting at "the pomps of death and theatres of blood," in which this barbaric court delights, there are many fierce beasts, not intended for fighting, retained merely as ornamental appendages. Several rhinoceroses are amongst the number; they are chained to trees in the park, but some of the tigers appear to be so ill-secured, rattling the wooden bars of their cages with such vigorous perseverance, that it requires rather strong

nerves to approach the places of their confinement. Delkusha (heart's delight) is one of the most celebrated of the parks belonging to the king; it is planted and laid out with great care and taste, open glades being cut through the thick forest, in which numerous herds of antelopes, Indian deer, and the gigantic variety of this interesting species, the nylghau, are seen disporting. This park abounds with monkeys, which are held sacred; for, though the Moslem religion has the ascendancy, that of the Hindoo is not only tolerated, but allowed the fullest enjoyment of its superstitions: the monkeys in this district are under the guardianship of a party of faqueers, who have established themselves in the private park of a Mohammedan monarch. The palace of Delkusha possesses no great exterior pretensions to elegance, but it is handsomely fitted up, and, in common with the other royal residences, contains toys and *bijouterie* sufficient to stock a whole bazaar of curiosity shops.

The pigeons belonging to Lucknow even exceed in number those of Benares, and other places where they are objects of reverence; here they are more esteemed for their beauty than for any peculiar sanctity, and the different breeds are preserved

with the greatest care. On the summits of nearly all the roofs of the palaces, particularly the zenanas, these interesting birds are seen in flocks of from seventy to a hundred in each; they are selected for the beauty of their plumage, and each variety is kept in a separate flock. Boys are employed to teach them different evolutions in their flights. When on the wing, they keep in a cluster, and at a whistle fly off into the fields of air, ascend, descend, or return home as the signal directs. When turning suddenly, and darting towards the sun, the gleam of their variegated necks produces a beautiful effect, and when they alight upon the ground, they form a carpet of the most brilliant colours and the richest design imaginable. So great is the native attachment to the amusements which these birds afford, that it is recorded of some of the sovereigns of Lucknow that, in their country excursions, "they were accompanied by their women and pigeons."

Another remarkable feature of this extraordinary city is its elephants, which are maintained in multitudes; immense numbers belong to the king, and all the nobility and rich people possess as many as their means will admit. In royal processions, festivals, and state-occasions, they appear in crowds.

A battalion of elephants, fifteen abreast, formed into a close-serried column, richly caparisoned in flowing *jhools* of scarlet and gold, with silver *howdahs*, and bearing natives of rank clothed in glittering tissues, form an imposing sight; but this can only be seen with full effect in the open country beyond the city. Once within the streets, the jostling and confusion are tremendous, and not unfrequently, in very narrow passes, ladders, and housings, or perhaps part of the roof on the verandah of the projecting buildings, are torn away by the struggles for precedence displayed by elephants, acquainted with their strength, and entering with ardour into the resolves of the mahouts to gain or maintain the foremost places. Elephants breed in a state of domestication, and young ones not larger than a good-sized pig, are frequently seen frolicking by the side of their mothers through the streets of Lucknow,—a spectacle fraught with interest to the eye of a European stranger. Camels are equally numerous, and, when handsomely caparisoned, add considerably to the splendour of a procession. The king's stud does not consist of fewer than a thousand horses, many of which are perfect specimens of the finest breeds, and are considered paragons of their kind; these are brought

out to increase the splendour of his retinue, and, even upon ordinary occasions, his suwarree exceeds in multitude and variety any European notion of ostentatious show. When seeking amusement at his numerous parks and gardens, the king is attended by immense numbers of people, and spare equipages of every description, dogs, hawks, hunting leopards, with their keepers; and an almost endless train of guards and domestics, both on horseback and on foot, form his multitudinous accompaniments; and though the delight in shew, which characterizes Asiatics, may be esteemed a childish and puerile taste, and we could wish the sovereign of so interesting a territory to be guided by nobler aims and to seek higher pursuits, one can scarcely desire that these pomps and pageantries, the relics of old romance, should be numbered with by-gone things.

Both the present and former rulers of Oude have manifested a strong partiality for European fashions and European manufactures, but their love of novelty has not been productive of any national improvement; they have thought of nothing beyond some idle gratification or indulgence, and their minds have not expanded, or their views become more enlightened, by constant intercourse with the

people who possess so much knowledge, both moral and political. A great number of foreigners have for many years been attached to the court of the king of Oude; a large proportion unquestionably might be styled mere adventurers, ignorant of every art excepting that which teaches them to profit by the follies and weaknesses of mankind; but there were others of a superior order, from whom many lessons of the highest practical utility might have been acquired.

The king of Oude has selected English officers for his aides-de-camp, his physicians belong to the Company's medical establishment, and he has also other persons of equal rank and intelligence attached to his household. An artist of great respectability and very considerable talent grew old in the service of Saadut Ali and his successor. This gentleman retired, at an advanced age, to spend the remainder of his days at Cawnpore, where he kept up a handsome establishment, and, until the loss of his daughter and increasing infirmities rendered him averse to society, had been wont to exercise the most extensive hospitality to the residents of the station. The place of Mr. Home is supplied, at the court of Lucknow, by Mr. George Beechy, who had distinguished him-

self by several masterly efforts of the pencil before he left England, and whose portrait of a native female, sent over and exhibited two years ago at Somerset House, attracted the attention of the best judges of the art. It is said,—but whether on sufficient authority we are unable to state,—that Asiatic prejudices had been so far remitted as to allow this gentleman access to the royal zenana, for the purpose of taking the portrait of the favourite wife. Such an innovation cannot fail to produce very important results; and there are too many indications of a similar nature occurring all over British India, to render it at all doubtful that, at no very distant period, the whole fabric of jealous restriction will give way, and that the women of Hindostan will receive the full enjoyment of liberty so long denied.

The Christian community of Lucknow is rather considerable when compared to that of other native cities; a great many of the shopkeepers and persons holding offices about the court are half-castes; and there are a multitude of hangers-on, of the same religion, who, attracted by the hope of enriching themselves under a monarch whose splendour and liberality have been of course exaggerated by report, pick up a subsistence, where

they had expected to find an easy path to wealth. The military cantonments, in which the Company's battalions are garrisoned, are situated at some distance from the city, where their neighbourhood acts as a salutary check, without creating the annoyance a more close association would naturally produce. There are turbulent spirits amongst the population of Lucknow, that can ill brook the military superiority of their British rulers, and, however hopeless the attempt, would gladly measure swords with them; but this hostility is not so general as some persons have asserted, and it is rarely manifested except upon some strong provocation.

Europeans have made complaints of the insolence which they have sustained in passing through the city without a numerous train of attendants; their palanquin-doors have been rudely opened, and other marks of disrespect evinced; but, though such things may have happened, conduct of this nature is by no means general, and in most cases, upon investigation, it would be found that the natives were not the first aggressors. The character of the complainant should always be taken into consideration; some Europeans are so imperious and exacting, that they see nothing but insolence and

defiance upon the part of those who do not approach them with servility and homage; while others, who think less of their own importance, are struck with the urbanity and courtesy which seem almost innate in natives of any intellectual pretensions. Thus, at a party given by the king of Oude, very contradictory reports will be disseminated respecting the conduct of the native visitants towards the European guests. From one we shall hear a triumphant account of his having succeeded in maintaining an upper seat in a struggle with some rude Mussulman, anxious to uphold his own dignity, and to lower the pride of the English; while another will dilate upon the polite attention he has received, and upon the gentlemanly manners and address, which, as a prevailing characteristic, exceeds that of more civilized countries. No Frenchmen have better command over their countenances when conversing with persons ill-acquainted with their language; they betray no disgust at the ungrammatical, vulgar phrases introduced by those who are only accustomed to talk to their servants, though they themselves are choice in their expressions, having a vocabulary quite distinct from that of the lower orders, and deeming it the height of ill-breeding to deviate

from the established rule. Unfortunately, this graciousness of demeanour, and tolerance of solecisms arising from an imperfect acquaintance with foreign manners and customs, is not very general amongst the English residents in India. They are glad to escape from society which is irksome to them, and it seems their endeavour to make their intercourse with the better classes of natives as brief as possible. This spirit will account for the little progress which knowledge has made at the court of Lucknow; and it seems a reproach to the Europeans attached to the residency, rather than to the natives themselves, that so much superstition and almost brutal ignorance should still prevail amongst a people eminently capable of becoming wise and enlightened. It is scarcely possible to imagine any thing more childish than the belief in omens, the notions of lucky and unlucky days, by which the most serious transactions of life are regulated by the king and his courtiers; and their utter ignorance of the principles which actuate men of honour, or indeed of common morality, would be incredible, were it not supported by well known and undeniable evidence.

Aga Meer, the favourite minister of the late king, had incurred the deepest hatred of his suc-

cessor, not only by the odium which he brought upon the government by his rapacity and cruelty, but on account of personal offences, which could neither be forgotten nor forgiven. A shew of reconciliation had taken place previous to the death of the then reigning monarch; and his son, released from confinement, readily agreed to bury the past in oblivion. Once seated on the throne, the opportunities which offered themselves to satiate long-smothered vengeance, could not be rejected. Aga Meer, justly alarmed for his safety, took refuge at the residency. The meditated blow was arrested, and the king, much to his mortification, discovered that he could neither take the life, nor seize the property, of the disgraced minister, both being under English protection. He, therefore, though reluctantly, contented himself with making him a prisoner in his own palace, the power which he was permitted to exercise extending no farther. Aga Meer's riches consisted of jewels and coin to a vast amount; these he had improvidently suffered to accumulate in his own house, instead of taking measures to secure them in foreign banks. There would have been little or no difficulty in effecting his own escape, but it was quite impossible to convey such

bulky treasures away in secret. His servants and satellites were, however, instructed to make the most tempting offers to young English officers, whose spirit and enterprize it was thought might achieve this anxiously desired object; but the attempt was too hopeless to be undertaken.

Aga Meer, at one time, endeavoured to practise an old and common stratagem; but such stage-tricks are now worn out in Asiatic theatres. He asked leave to send his women away, and loaded their palanquins with jewels. On the present occasion, female privacy was not respected; the palanquins were searched, and Aga Meer was glad to get them back within his own walls. Though the minister despaired of effecting his purpose, the king felt extremely apprehensive that some powerful aid would be raised up in favour of a man possessed of such enormous wealth, and that he,—and the sequel proved that he was not wrong in his conjecture,—would be disappointed of the golden prize.

Aga Meer's death now became an object of the greatest importance, and in the opinion of the monarch's friends and confidant's, an easy mode of effecting it presented itself. The health of the prisoner, somewhat injured by anxiety and confine-

ment, was entrusted to the care of a medical officer of the Company's establishment. This gentleman, in whom Aga Meer reposed the greatest confidence, was pitched upon by the conspirators for the instrument of their project. Nothing doubting that he would fall readily into their schemes, two exceedingly polite and plausible persons paid him a visit, and after a few hints, not easy to be understood by a man of high moral principles, proceeded to say that he would greatly oblige and gratify the king by administering a dose of poison to Aga Meer, a service which would be rewarded by the gift of a lac of rupees. Somewhat embarrassed by this extraordinary proposition, and not knowing how far his character might be implicated by its having been made to him, the gentleman dissembled his indignation and horror; asking time for consideration, he dismissed his guests, and repairing to the residency, laid the whole affair before the chief personage appointed by the Company to superintend the affairs of Oude. The surgeon was instructed to appoint another meeting, and to enter into some specific arrangement, which should fully commit the persons who had contrived this cold-blooded scheme. They did not hesitate to bring a deposit of half the money, and when surprised by

some unseen witnesses of their interview, could not be made to comprehend the disgust which their proposal had occasioned. They seemed to think it very extraordinary that a poor man should refuse to enrich himself upon such easy terms, dwelling with great complacency upon the facility with which the whole affair might be managed, by the substitution of some deadly drug for a dose of medicine. Upon consideration, the resident deemed it most advisable to hush up this affair, but it was commonly talked of amongst the European community; and the writer of the present narrative received the whole account from the lips of the principal actor, who gave a most interesting, as well as amusing, description of the surprise which the discovery of his scruples elicited.

In little more than a year after this transaction Aga Meer obtained his release, but it was not effected without the most spirited interference on the part of the Governor-general, whose determination to compel the king of Oude to yield up his long-desired victim, could not be resisted. A regiment of cavalry was sent over to Lucknow to escort the prisoner across the frontier, and the whole of the garrison of Cawnpore were under orders to march, and lay siege to the capital of Oude, in

case the king should refuse to allow Aga Meer to depart with all his treasure. The writer was at Cawnpore at the period of this important transit. It was a time of considerable excitement, though the result could scarcely justify a doubt. Amongst the young military men, nothing was more eagerly desired than a *tamasha* of the kind, and at one time great hopes were entertained of the king's obstinacy: but he was too wise to allow passion to o'er-master prudence, and with little less than Pharoah's reluctance, suffered his enemy to depart unscathed. Aga Meer's treasures, amounting, it was said, to the enormous sum of twenty-five crores of rupees (as many millions sterling), were conveyed across the Ganges in eight hundred hackeries (bullock-carts); he established himself at Cawnpore, purchasing several of the most beautiful of the houses which had been built by the English residents for their own accommodation, at a period in which they could better afford to lodge sumptuously than at the present day. Aga Meer did not survive his emancipation very long; the circumstances of his death are enveloped in mystery, and rumours are abroad that the vengeance of the king of Oude overtook him at the moment in which he enjoyed a fancied security. His wealth also, it is said, un-

accountably disappeared; many of his servants, after his decease, were in a state of destitution from the impossibility of procuring the payment of their wages, which had been long in arrears.

Those who are acquainted with all the particulars of his eventful life,—and they are known to many, —could furnish a very interesting memoir of this subtle adventurer, and the information conveyed by such a narrative would throw considerable light upon the complicated net-work of the affairs of Oude. Originally a common *mussalchee*, or scullion, Aga Meer contrived to ingratiate himself with his superiors, and rose at length to the highest appointment in the state. His rapacity is said to have known no bounds, and if he sanctioned half the acts of cruelty and oppression which are laid to his charge, no monster in the human form ever committed crimes of more fearful magnitude. Reverencing neither sex nor age, upon any pretext for the seizure of property, his myrmidons were directed to violate the sacred precincts of the *zenana*. The males of the family, bound by the dearest ties of honour to prevent such an outrage, were usually slain in the rash attempt; while the women, unable to survive the disgrace of exposure to the rude gaze, and still ruder touch, of lawless men, threw

themselves into the wells, perishing miserably by their own hands. Whole families were thus swept away, their habitations were razed to the ground, and their inheritance became the prey of the spoiler.

Though many Europeans might have been tempted by the hope of a rich reward to effect the deliverance of Aga Meer, none felt any pity for the captive, or deemed his fate unmerited. In our ignorance of the motives which actuated the Governor-general's resolute interposition in his behalf, we are not justified in condemning the measures he adopted; but it was generally considered rather hard upon the king of Oude, that so notorious a delinquent should have been suffered to carry away the wealth he had wrung from an impoverished country. Succeeding ministers have been little less oppressive than Aga Meer. Hukeem Mhendee Ali, who, during the period of his former disgrace, entered into very extensive mercantile concerns at Futtyghur, has been recalled, but is now again in banishment; rumours are afloat that the late failures in Calcutta, though long threatening, were ultimately occasioned by the sudden withdrawal of a very large sum of money from one of the agency-houses by this person, who, it is said, was incited

to revenge himself upon those members of the government who refused to support him in the administration of the affairs of Oude.

Oude is still celebrated for the barbarous spectacles in which, by a strange perversion of taste, men in all ages and countries have taken delight. While cock-fighting continues to be a favourite amusement in England, we ought not, perhaps, to visit the combats of wild beasts, which take place on occasions of great festivity at Lucknow, with the reprehension which such inhuman sports should call forth. Upon the arrival of a new resident, the visit of a commander-in-chief, or any occasion of equal importance, the court of Lucknow is seen in all its glory. It is the custom for one of the princes to meet the expected guest at the distance of perhaps two days' march from the city; the *cortège* at these times is very resplendent, the cavalcade being composed of a vast body of elephants, attended by battalions of infantry and cavalry, led-horses, palanquins, heralds, mace-bearers, and a nondescript throng of half-armed and half-naked pedestrians. It is the fashion for one of the great men to invite the other to partake his howdah; the two retinues join, and with all the noise they can make, and all the dust they can kick up, the whole *suwarree*

sweeps along the road—the irregular cavalry darting out in all directions, displaying their horsemanship, and their skill as spear and swordsmen, by carrying on a running tilt, charging, careering, and curvetting, without the slightest consideration of any impediment in the shape of bank or ditch. The king himself makes his appearance at the outskirts of the city, and the same ceremonies are gone through; the honoured guest is invited to share the monarch's howdah; and an embrace, performed in public, shows the amicable terms which the two governments are upon with each other.

It is astonishing how few accidents occur from the jostling and concussion of these promiscuous multitudes of horse and foot. Elephants, fortunately, rarely take any delight in wanton mischief; their sagacity enables them to estimate the damage they might commit, and, even when most incited to action, they are careful of the lives and limbs of the multitude around them. Natives ride so admirably, that, notwithstanding the incurable vice of their horses, those who have been accustomed to the field are rarely or ever thrown; there will, however, be always some inexpert horsemen, where no one will walk if he can by any means mount himself; and hence the necessity of attendant grooms,

armed with spears, whose business it is to keep off loose steeds, which, after throwing their riders, attack others with the ferocity of wild beasts, tearing at every thing that comes in their way. It is the etiquette, upon a triumphal entry of this description, for the king to give a breakfast to his guests, and this is always attempted in the European fashion. Though splendid in its kind, and closely resembling its model, there are always some inattentions to minute particulars, which mar the whole affair; thus the tea and coffee are never served up hot, and the forks which are only put into requisition upon such occasions, look as if they had been thrown into a godown since the last entertainment, a year or two before, and left to accumulate rust and dirt.

It is exceedingly difficult to make native servants comprehend the propriety of serving up tea while it is hot; such a thing may be compassed in private families, but never at a public entertainment, where, in order to be ready, every thing is prepared a long time before it is wanted. Old campaigners usually contrive to bring a supply of such things as are essential to their own comfort. The writer, at a very large assembly of the kind, had the good fortune to find the only vacant seat at table next a

gentleman who had provided himself with a tripod of charcoal, and other means and appliances for a comfortable breakfast. The tea-kettle was singing merrily outside the door, and the careful *khidmutghar* had ensconced the tea-pot under his master's chair. The neighbours came in for a portion of the beverage which "cheers but not inebriates," and which afforded a very requisite refreshment after an encounter with the dust and fatigue attendant upon a native spectacle. The *khansamah* of the king of Oude, however, must not suffer in his character of caterer, on account of little discrepancies, perhaps not in his power to remedy or avoid.

Bishop Heber has borne honourable testimony to the culinary powers of the *maître-d'hotel* who officiated during his sojourn; and the writer can never forget a certain fowl, prepared by the hands of the king's especial attendant (for *khansamahs*, though they have cooks under them, always superintend the process themselves), which a Ude or a Carême might view with envy. It was roasted, and served up whole, but so spiced and saturated with curry-powder, as to form no bad representation of a salamander. It may not be unimportant to add, that the preparation, though excellent in its kind, which goes under the name of the king of Oude's sauce,

does not bear any resemblance to the zests and relishes of various descriptions which are served up at the king's table; the chetney's and sweet pickles, for which Lucknow is famous, and which, especially the latter, London oilmen would do well to import or imitate.

The etiquette at the court of Oude differs considerably from that of Delhi; though in both the receiving and presenting nuzzurs form the principal ceremonial. In imitation of European sovereigns, the king gives his portrait set in diamonds to ambassadors and other persons of rank, this distinction being also bestowed upon the aides-de-camp, and officers who have accepted situations of equal honour at the court. There is nothing very remarkable about the audience-chamber, but the king's throne is extremely splendid. It is a square platform, raised two feet from the ground, with a railing on three sides, and a canopy supported upon pillars; of these the frame-work is wood, but the casing pure gold, set with precious stones of great value; the canopy is of crimson-velvet richly embroidered with gold, and finished with a deep fringe of pearls; the cushions, on which the king is seated, are also of embroidered velvet; and the emblem of royalty, the chattah, is of the same, with a deep

fringe of pearls. The king appears literally covered with jewels, the whole of the body down to the waist being decorated with strings of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, &c.; his crown is a perfect constellation of gems, and overshadowed by plumes of the bird of paradise. A native of rank stands on either side of the throne, waving chowries of peacocks' feathers set in gold handles. To the right of the throne are gilt chairs for the accommodation of the resident and his wife, if he be a married man, the rank of the British ambassador (who certainly acts the part of viceroy over the king) being recognized as equal to that of the monarch himself; he is the only person permitted the use of the chattah, the chowrie, and the hookah, in the sovereign's presence. The English persons attached to the residency take up their position behind and at the side of these chairs, standing; those in the service of the king wearing very handsome court-dresses of puce-coloured cloth, richly embroidered with gold. The left of the throne is occupied by natives of rank holding high official situations, splendidly attired in the picturesque costume of the country. The prime-minister stands at the king's feet to receive and present the nuzzurs. These consist of money, from twenty-one gold mohurs down to

a few rupees in silver, according to the circumstances of the parties. The person offering advances to the throne with many salaams, and having his gift placed upon a folded handkerchief, presents it to the king to touch in token of acceptance; it is then given to the minister, who adds it to the heap by his side. After this ceremony, the king and the resident rise; the former takes from the hands of a person in waiting certain necklaces composed of silver ribbon, ingeniously plaited, which offer a cheap mode of conferring distinction; the investiture is made by the king in person; and upon taking leave, the resident is accompanied by the king to the entrance, where he salutes him with a short sentence, "God be with you!" pouring *atta* on his hands at the final exit. Should the ambassador happen to be in great favour at the time, the compliment is extended to all the English visitants as they pass out.

Titles of honour, khillauts, and their accompanying distinctions,—such as an elephant fully caparisoned, a charger, or a palanquin—are frequently conferred upon these court-days; the nuzzur is then of proportionate value, persons anxiously coveting some grant or distinction offering not less than a lac of rupees; this sum is conveyed in

a hundred bags, covered with crimson silk, tied with a silver ribbon, and so solid a proof of attachment is not unfrequently rewarded by an embrace before the whole court, a mark of royal favour well worth the money bestowed upon it, since any person's fortune is made in native states, who is known to have interest at court.

The king's dinners are better than his breakfasts; there is abundance of wine for the English guests, and though the native visitants do not partake in public, many confess that they indulge at their own tables. Nautches and fireworks conclude the evening's entertainment; the latter can never be shewn off to so much advantage as in an Indian city. where the buildings they illuminate are of the same fairy-like nature. No description can do justice to the scene presented on some fine, dark, clear night, when the Goomtee is covered with boats, of those long canoe-shaped graceful forms, belonging to the king, some resembling alligators, others swans, peacocks, or dolphins, enamelled in various colours, intermingled with gold, and filled with a splendid company glittering in gems and tissues. Blue lights, so artfully disposed as not to be visible, while they clothe the whole pageant with their unearthly gleams, render every adjacent object dis-

tinct; and as the blaze of ten thousand rockets bursts forth, palaces, mosques, and temples seem to rise majestically during the brief illumination. In the next moment, all is dark save the pageant on the Goomtee; and again minarets and domes, cupolas and spires spring up, silver and gold, as the marble and the gilding catch the vivid gleams of jets and spouts of fire ascending to the skies.

CHAPTER VI.

MAHOMMEDAN FESTIVALS.

The poor remnants of splendour still possessed by the court of Delhi, are mustered and displayed with some approximation to former pomp at the annual celebration of the *Buckra Eade;* but it is at Lucknow that the most imposing spectacle takes place at this festival. The followers of Mahomet claim to be descendants of the patriarch, through his son Ishmael, who they aver to have been chosen for the offering of the Almighty, and not Isaac: thus differing from the belief of Jews and Christians, and supporting their assertion, in contradiction to the authority of the Bible, by writings which, in their opinion, contain sufficient evidence in favour of their claims. The offering thus made to Heaven is commemorated by the sacrifice of particular animals, camels, sheep, goats, kids, or lambs, according to each person's means; this is supposed to answer a double purpose, not only honouring the

memory of Abraham and Ishmael, but the sacrifices assisting in a time of great need. It is supposed that the entrance to Paradise is guarded by a bridge made of a scythe or some instrument equally sharp, and affording as unstable a footing. The followers of the prophet are required to skait or skim over this passage, and it will be attended with more or less difficulty, according to the degree of favour they have obtained in the sight of heaven. The truly pious will be wafted over in safety, but the undeserving must struggle many times, and be often cut down in the attempt, before they can gain the opposite side. In this extremity, it is imagined that the same number and kind of animals, which, being clean and esteemed fitting for sacrifice, they have offered up at the celebration of the Buckra Eade, will be in waiting to convey them in safety along the perilous passage of the bridge. Under this belief, the richer classes of Mahommedans supply their indigent brethren with goats and sheep for the sacrifice: a work of charity incited by the purest motives, and which, if not possessing all the efficacy ascribed to it, at least furnishes the poor man's house with an ample and a welcome feast; for though poverty compels the lower classes of Mussulmans to imitate the Hindoos in the frugality of

a vegetable meal, they never refuse meat when it is procurable.

Great preparations are made at Lucknow for the celebration of the Buckra Eade; a busy scene takes place upon the river, where the elephants are sent to bathe for the occasion. One at least of these animals being kept by every person who can afford to maintain them, the multitude of elephants, in a population estimated at three hundred thousand persons, may be imagined. Since our acquaintance with the interior of South America has increased, we have become familiar with the appearance of beggars on horseback; but it is only, perhaps, at Lucknow that one of the fraternity aspires to an elephant. A few years ago, a mendicant, who went by the name of Shah Jee, being in high favour with the king, to whom it is said he had predicted things which afterwards came to pass, was permitted to levy contributions through the city, and, mounted upon an elephant, demanded five cowries daily of every shopkeeper. The tax upon each individual was very small, it taking four-score of these shells to make up the value of a half-penny; but the sum, when collected throughout all the bazaars of the place, amounted to a very considerable revenue.

After the elephants have been well washed in the

river, their skins are oiled, and their heads painted with various devices; they are then decorated in their embroidered jhools, many of which have gold borders a quarter of a yard in depth, and these are surmounted by howdahs, either painted to resemble enamel, or formed entirely of silver. The caparisons of the horses are not less magnificent; the saddles and stirrups are of solid silver, and large silver necklaces, composed of pendant medallions spread over the chest, have a very beautiful effect, and give out a tinkling sound as the animal, proud of his trappings, prances along. The tails are dyed of a bright scarlet, and some have stars and crescents painted on their haunches. Gold is sometimes substituted for silver in the caparisons of these animals, and where ornaments of this kind are too costly for the purses of the owners, decorations not so rich, but equally gay, are substituted. The necklace is composed of beads, and the head is adorned with tufts of variegated silk, which have a very picturesque effect. Camels are usually decorated in the same manner, it not being very often that, with the exception of the bells attached to their collars, silver ornaments are bestowed upon animals more esteemed for their utility than for the beauty of their appearance, or

as an appendage of state. The camel is perhaps underrated, for, as an adjunct to an Oriental pageant, he is of great importance; the nodding heads, arched necks, and conical backs of these animals, though grotesque in themselves, add greatly to the effect of a mingled body of elephants, horses, and men; an Asiatic group never being perfect except when camels form a portion of it. The animals intended for sacrifice at the celebration of the Buckra Eade, are conveyed to a place at some distance from the city, built for the purpose of containing them, and called the Eade-Gaarh, a court or quadrangle, surrounded by a bastioned wall, and entered by lofty gateways.

The processions at Delhi and Lucknow are particularly imposing, that of Delhi owing the greater portion of its splendour to the retinues of the Omrahs and great men of the court, while at Lucknow the *cortège* of the king renders every attempt at imitation hopeless. All his troops appear upon this day in new clothing, and the *coup d'œil* is rendered more effective by an attention to minute particulars generally neglected in native arrangements; Asiatics paying little regard to consistence. The van of the cavalcade is formed of fifty camels, carrying swivels, each accompanied by a driver

and two gunners in white uniforms, with turbans and cummerbunds of red and green, the colours of the cloth composing the housings of the camels. A park of artillery succeeds, the gunners being clothed in blue uniforms; next two troops of cavalry, in the picturesque vests worn by suwars, of scarlet cloth, with pointed caps of black lamb-skin. After these a regiment of foot, only half-clad, in wild barbaric costume, the trowser scarcely extending mid-way down the thigh, where it is vandyked with black points: they have red jackets and small turbans of black leather, and the warlike but dissonant music of the *dunkah*, or kettle-drum, assimilates well with the strange fantastic display made by these troops. The *nujeebs* are closely followed by the most gorgeous portion of the spectacle, the elephant-carriages of the king and his court; the great satrap himself sits enthroned in a sort of triumphal car of silver, canopied and curtained with crimson velvet, embroidered and fringed with gold, and drawn by four elephants exactly matched in colour, height, and size. The others have only two elephants each, but all glitter with gold and silver, and the gallant company, so proudly borne along, shine from head to foot in gems and brocade. Their turbans are adorned with costly aigrettes of

jewels; clasps, studs, belts, rings, and bracelets, of the most precious treasures of the mine, appear in the greatest profusion, down to the gem-enamelled slipper, and these are set off by the graceful flow of drapery composed of the most beautifully-woven tissues, and shawls of the finest fabric. Round these chariots, *chobdars* (mace-bearers), *chuprassies*, *hurkaras*, and other state attendants—some brandishing sheathed scimitars, and others fanning the air with *chowries*—shout out the titles of the illustrious and puissant personages to whom they belong; while a cloud of irregular horse hover on either side, tilting and curvetting apparently with disorderly recklessness, yet in reality conducting their evolutions with the most consummate skill. The king's led horses follow to swell the pomp and the parade; they are all richly caparisoned, and attended by grooms in handsome liveries. The royal *paalkie* and palanquin next appear; these native vehicles are of the most splended description, constructed entirely of wrought gold, each carried by bearers clad in long scarlet vests, embroidered with gold, their turbans ornamented with the emblems of royalty. The state-carriage also forms a portion of this part of the shew; it is of English make, drawn by eight black horses, driven in hand by an

European coachman in scarlet livery, or rather uniform. The English gentlemen composing the foreign portion of the king's suite appear in their court-dresses, mounted upon elephants, and after them a long train of the native nobility, also mounted in the same manner, the whole being closed by horse and foot soldiers, those belonging to the India Company marching with their colours unfurled, and their bands playing, while hundreds of banneroles, of gold and silver tissue, flaunt in the air in every direction.

Notwithstanding the want of order and discipline, which seems essential to the movement of so large a body, the procession arrives at its place of destination without being materially disarranged by the apparent confusion, which is considerably augmented by the clashing of instruments, those of Europe striving with hopeless efforts to vie with the clang and clamour of the native trumpet and drum. The cavalcade being drawn up at the place appointed, the superior priest or moollah, after going through the usual religious service, presents a knife to the king, who, repeating a prayer, plunges his weapon into the throat of a camel, the victim selected for sacrifice. The artillery-men are all in readiness, and when the

signal is given of the completion of the ceremony by the king himself, a general discharge of musquetry and cannon announces the circumstance to the whole of the city. The religious part of the festival is then ended, and the rejoicings begin. The camel thus slaughtered is served up at the royal table, on the only occasion in which the flesh of this animal is eaten in Hindostan; portions are sent as presents, a gift which is supposed to confer no small degree of honour; and the European residents, both at Lucknow and at Delhi, are often complimented with a share. The feasting is universal, for it being an essential duty on the part of the Mahommedans to dispense to others the bounties and blessings which they themselves receive, the poor on this day partake of the luxuries of the rich man's table. Upon his return to the city, the king of Oude holds a court, and the Buckra Eade is often chosen as the period of conferring honour and titles. Formerly it was the custom for Europeans to receive regular patents of nobility from native courts; but this does not appear to be common at present, the honour being little coveted by people who affect to look down upon Asiatic dignities.* On the presentation of a *khillaut*, titles of honour are always included, and the heralds are

very liberal in their proclamations, especially at Delhi, where it is cheaper and consequently more expedient to substitute high-sounding words for more solid marks of royal favour. Many Governor-generals and Commanders-in-chief have been made omrahs, khans, or nawabs by the king of Delhi; yet it is very questionable whether any have thought it worth their while to have these titles confirmed according to the etiquette practised concerning those conferred at European courts; and both the *khillaut* and the title seem now to have degenerated into an idle ceremony, which, as far as Europeans are concerned, means nothing but an empty compliment. With natives, however, the rank and consequence of each individual materially depend upon the degree of estimation in which he is known to be held at court; certain distinctions are withheld from the multitude, which are eagerly coveted, and made the subject of much cabal and intrigue. The rank of a party is known by his equipage, palanquins of a peculiar construction being only permitted to privileged persons, who receive them with the grant of their titles from the king.

The festivities of the Buckra Eade are concluded by nautches and fire-works; every palace through-

out the city of Lucknow is illuminated; the river is covered with boats filled with musicians and dancing-girls, and though the rejoicings are more strictly private in the zenanas, they too have their share: the ladies, sumptuously attired, and laden with jewels, congregate together; dances of a more decorous nature than those exhibited to male eyes are performed before them, and after a luxurious banquet, they indulge with never-failing zest in the hookah and pāān.

Notwithstanding the time occupied in the procession to the Eade-Gaarh, or in the court or durbar held after it, the king contrives to devote a portion of the day to the favourite spectacle, the wild-beast fights, at which, strange to say, many European ladies submit to be present. A public breakfast also to the members of the Residency forms a part of the entertainments. In so anomalous a proceeding as the appearance of females at an Asiatic court, there can of course be no established rule respecting their dress; convenience more than etiquette is consulted, and the ladies do not scruple to attend these breakfasts in morning dresses, and in bonnets. During the reign of those enormous hats, which scarcely fell short of a carriage-wheel in circumference, the king of Oude experienced

considerable difficulty in the investiture of the *haarh*, or necklace; the tinsel garland, on more than one occasion, stuck half-way, producing no little embarrassment on the part of the lady, and compelling the king to abandon the hope of performing his part of the ceremony with his accustomed grace.

Few things surprise the natives of India more than the changes in European fashions; no sooner has an unfortunate *dirzee* (tailor) mastered the intricacies of a folded body, than he has to exert his bewildered faculties upon the production of another, without plait or pucker; some ladies, who are unable to afford any instructions to their work-people, exhibit prints of fashions to the wondering eyes of these poor men, who gaze upon them with amazed and hopeless countenances, honestly acknowledging their inability to follow such a guide. The mysterious phraseology in which the milliners of Paris and London are wont to envelop their descriptions, are equally puzzling to the ladies themselves; and strange indeed are some of the articles produced by the joint-efforts of the mystified *dirzee*, and his equally perplexed mistress. This state of things is not very propitious to feminine display; and, accordingly, it must reluctantly

be said that the court at Lucknow does not derive any additional lustre from the ladies of the Residency when they make their appearance at it, the effect being rather diminished than heightened by the contrast of the somewhat plain if not dowdy apparel of the fair visitants, with the gorgeous shew of the Asiatic groups.

The king of Oude is often present at the celebration of European marriages, and upon one occasion, at least, gave the bride away; a strange office for a Mahommedan monarch to perform to a Christian lady. The rigid laws made and enacted by the British government, are in a slight degree relaxed when such a circumstance takes place, and the bride is permitted to retain the string of pearls with which the king encircles her neck. At other festivals, the situation of English ladies is exceedingly tantalizing; they see trays laid at their feet containing shawls such as had haunted their early dreams, dazzling brocades of silver, and necklaces of glittering gems. These are offered to their acceptance with flattering compliments, in which they are told that all the riches of the kingdom shall be at their disposal. They are content with the portion assigned to them, but see,—and sometimes the sight brings tears into their eyes,—the tempting

treasures seized by a government *chuprassy*, and restored to the place from whence they came. It is necessary that the resident should be made of very stern stuff to resist the pleadings of young ladies, who implore him to make an exception in their particular case from the general rule so despotically enforced, and resistance is rendered more difficult by the good-humoured endeavours of the natives to second the fair damsels' wishes. Confidential servants sometimes contrive to rescue a shawl or two from the hands of the Philistines, and after the whole *nuzzur* has been hopelessly surrendered, a part has been clandestinely conveyed, under cover of the night, to the private apartment of the disconsolate fair one, who, if unmarried, and therefore not implicating any one but herself, does not feel bound to respect the ordinances of the government, and accepts with as little scruple as if she were purchasing some piece of contraband goods in England.

The celebration of the Moharrum, in all large Mahommedan communities of the Sheah sect, though, strictly speaking, a fast of the most mournful kind, is accompanied by so much pomp and splendour, that strangers are at some loss to distinguish it from festivals of pure rejoicing. In no

part of India is this interesting anniversary of the Moslem year commemorated with more zeal and enthusiasm than at Lucknow.

It is certain that the Sheah sect, who are settled in Hindostan, are in some degree obnoxious to the charge brought against them by their enemies, of introducing rites and ceremonies almost bordering upon idolatry in their devotion to the memory of the Imaums Hossein and Houssien. Imbibing a love of shew from long domestication with a people passionately attached to pageantry and spectacle, they have departed from the plainness and simplicity of the worship of their ancestors, and in the decorations of the *taxees*, and the processions which accompany them to the place of sepulture, display their reverential regard for Ali and his sons in a manner which would be esteemed scandalous if thus accompanied in Persia and Arabia, where the grief of the Sheah is more quietly and soberly manifested, without the admixture of those theatrical exhibitions, which so wonderfully excite and inflame the mind at the celebration of this festival all over India.

Several processions take place during the celebration of the Mohurrum. At Lucknow, on the fifth day, the banners are carried to a celebrated

shrine, or *durgah*, in the neighbourhood, to be consecrated, it being supposed that the standard of Hossein, miraculously pointed out to a devout believer, is preserved at this place. The veneration in which this sacred relic is held, nearly equalling that which in some places in Europe is displayed towards pieces of the true cross, affords another proof of the corruption of the Mahommedan religion by the Sheah sect of India. The *durgah* at Lucknow is not only visited at the commemoration of Hossein's obsequies, but prayers and oblations are offered in its holy precincts, upon recovery from illness, or any other occasion which calls for praise and thanksgiving. The gifts deposited at the *durgah*, consisting of money, clothes, and other valuable articles, become the property of the officiating priest, who is expected to disburse the greater portion in charity. All the Moslem inhabitants of Lucknow are anxious to consecrate the banners employed at the Mohurrum, by having them touched by the sacred relic, and for this purpose they are conveyed to the shrine with as much pomp and ceremony as the circumstances of the proprietors will admit. A rich man sends his banners upon elephants, surrounded by an armed guard, and accompanied by bands of music; these stand-

ards are pennant-shaped, and very long, some formed of silver or gold tissue, and all richly embroidered; they are followed by a procession on foot, clad in mourning. The arms and accoutrements, representing those worn by Hossein, are carried in some of these processions; and one of the most important features, is Dhull Dhull, the horse slain with his master on the fatal field of Kurbelah: his trappings are dyed with blood, and arrows are seen sticking in his sides. Multitudes of people form these processions, which frequently stop while the moollahs recite the oft-told, but never-tiring story, or the tragic scene is enacted by young men expert at broad-sword exercises: and as Hossein is surrounded and beaten down, musquets are fired off, and shouts and beatings of the breast attest the sincerity with which his followers bewail his untimely end.

The celebration of the Mohurrum is not confined to the higher classes; every person who has a small sum to spare subscribes, with others of the same means, to purchase the necessary articles for the purpose. *Taxees* and banners of all sizes, prices, and denominations, are sold in the bazaars, and group after group are seen upon the roads and public avenues, some accompanied by the most

splendid decorations, and others content with a very humble display, but all impressed with the same desire to do honour to the martyrs. One of the most curious effects of these multitudinous assemblages, is produced by the umbrellas, or *chattahs*, which are generally very gay, and formed of various colours; they are seen in moving masses, like the billows of the sea, and have a more singular appearance when carried by persons on foot, than when they canopy the *howdah*, to which, however, they form a very magnificent appendage.

The open plains of India are calculated to shew off these processions to great advantage; and as the Mohurrum takes place during the rainy season, there is no dust, and cloudy weather enables European spectators to gaze upon the pageant without danger of being blinded by the glare of a noon-day sun. On the seventh night of the Mohurrum, the marriage of Hossein's daughter with her cousin, a faithful partisan of the house of Ali, is celebrated with much pomp and shew. This event really took place on the day of the battle on the plains of Kurbelah, where Hossein was surprised in his camp and compelled to combat with his enemies at the greatest disadvantage. The marriage procession repairs to some celebrated tomb or mosque in the

neighbourhood; and at Lucknow it is sometimes directed to the Imaum-baareh, the magnificent cathedral-like edifice in which Asoph ud Dowlah, its founder, and the first king of Oude, lies buried. The interior, when fitted up for this purpose, is gorgeous beyond imagination; and though, if examined in detail, the display will be found to resemble the gew-gaw frippery of theatric pomp, yet, when lighted up at night, and accompanied by the florid beauties of Asiatic architecture, and the picturesque assemblages of its crowds, the splendid effect of the whole disarms criticism, and the spectator abandons himself wholly to the enchantments of the scene.

The *taxee* belonging to the kings of Oude, which, strange to say, was manufactured in England, forms one of the most striking ornaments. It is formed of green glass, mounted with brass mouldings. Models in silver of holy places at Mecca are supported upon stands of the same metal, in recesses made for their reception; the royal emblem, the fish, appears in all directions; and selections from the armoury of the king form some of the most costly of the decorations. Few monarchs are in possession of a more valuable collection of offensive and defensive weapons. The

fire-arms are of unrivalled beauty, inlaid and set with gold and gems: while the swords and daggers, of the finest polish, have hilts of agate, lapis lazuli, chrysolite, or blood-stone, and are ornamented in relief or in intaglio, with an immense variety of figures and foliage of the most delicate patterns, wrought in gold and silver. These and other ornamental devices are reflected from numerous mirrors, and the whole is bathed in floods of light from multitudes of wax tapers and lamps of various colours. The quadrangles of the Imaum-baareh are similarly illuminated, and their vast dimensions, the beauty of their proportions, the rich grouping of the pinnacles and domes, the long arcades, lofty gateways, and tall minars, can seldom, if ever, be seen to such advantage as when the dazzling resplendence of artificial light imitates the blaze of day, without its heat and glare, and when the darkness of the surrounding atmosphere throws each illuminated building into bright relief.

The procession of the marriage of the unfortunate Cossim and his ill-fated bride is distinguished by trays bearing the wedding-presents, and covered palanquins, supposed to convey the lady and her attendants; the animals employed in the cavalcade, with the exception of the favoured Dhull Dhull,

are left outside the walls; but the trays containing sweet-meats, &c., a model of the tomb of Cossim, and the palanquin of the bride, are brought into the interior and committed to the care of the keepers of the sanctuary, until the last day, when they make a part of the final procession to the place of interment. Dhull Dhull, trained and educated with the same attention devoted to the champion's horse at the coronation of the kings of England, is conducted round the *tazee*, and his performance, which is somewhat difficult (the polished pavement being very slippery), usually excites a proportionate degree of admiration in the spectators. Money is distributed amongst the populace, as upon the occasion of a real wedding; and when it is considered that a strict fast is maintained during the whole period of the Mohurrum, the least devout relinquishing the greater portion of their usual indulgences, the immense sums of money lavished upon the mere parade of grief seem almost incredible. Many of the followers of Ali, in addition to the austerities practised at the Mohurrum, will stint themselves in clothes and food during the whole year, in order to launch forth with greater *éclat* at this time: privations partly induced by the enthusiastic affection cherished by all classes of Sheahs

for their murdered Imaums, and partly by the passion for display common to the Asiatic character.

The most extraordinary feature, however, in the commemoration of Hossein's and Houssein's death, is the participation of the Hindoos, who are frequently seen to vie with the disciples of Ali in their demonstrations of grief for the slaughter of his two martyred sons: and in the splendour of the pageant displayed at the anniversary of their fate. A very large proportion of Hindoos go into mourning during the ten days of the Mohurrum, clothing themselves in green garments, and assuming the guise of fakeers. A Mahratta prince of Gwalior was distinguished for the ardour with which he entered into all the Mahommedan observances of the period. He appeared at the Durbar attired in green, wearing no ornaments excepting eight or ten strings of magnificent emeralds round his neck, even discarding his pearls, though the favourite decorations of his person, and worn in such profusion as to entitle him to the designation to which he aspired, *Motee-wallah*, 'man of pearls.'

Amongst the Mahrattas, the brahmins alone decline to join in the rites and ceremonies practised at the Mohurrum, many of the wealthy sirdars constructing *tazees* at their own expense, and joining

with true Mahommedan zeal in the lamentations poured forth at the recital of the melancholy events at Kurbalah The complaisance of the Hindoos is returned with interest at the Hoolee, the Indian Saturnalia, in which the disciples of the prophet mingle with the heartiest good will, apparently too much delighted with the general licence and frolic revelries of that strange carnival, to be withheld from joining it by horror of its heathen origin.

In many points there is a blending between the two religions, which could scarcely be expected from the intolerant disciples of Mahomet and the exclusive followers of Brahma; the former are no longer the furious and sanguinary bigots, carrying fire and sword into the temples of strange gods, and forcing conquered tribes to conform to their opinions upon pain of death. Their zeal has relaxed, and they have become vitiated by the examples around them. The courtesy of the Hindoo is more consistent, for he is of opinion that the numerous modes of worship, practised by the different nations of the earth, all emanate from the deity, and are equally acceptable to him, who prescribed various forms to suit various persons; and, under this impression, he pays respect to the holidays prescribed by the Koran, or distinguished for the commemoration of remarkable events in the life of

the prophet or his apostles. Political expedience has had some effect in producing this toleration. Hindoos have found it advantageous to their interests to assist at Mussulman ceremonies, and the faithful have not been backward in the sacrifice of religious prejudices upon occasions of great importance. Conversions have also been extremely imperfect; many of those, who conformed to the creed of Mahomet, retaining ceremonials and observances little less than idolatrous; while others of purer descent have found it almost impossible to withstand the corrupting influence of example. Yet, amidst this harmonious accordance between persons professing such opposite religions, there are occasional out-breaks, in which the Moslem and the Hindoo display all the fierceness and animosity which formerly distinguished them, against each other. Insults are offered at festivals which neither party are slow to return or avenge; and when, as it sometimes happens, the holidays of the Hindoo and the Mussulman fall together, it requires no small exertion on the part of the authorities to prevent a hostile collision. At Allahabad, on the celebration of the Mohurrum, some of the leading persons repaired to the judge to request that the Hindoos, who were about to perform some of their idolatrous worship, should not be permitted

to blow their trumpets, and beat their drums, and bring their heathenish devices in contact with the sad and holy solemnity, the manifestations of their grief for the death of the Imaums. They represented, in the most lively manner, the obligation which Christians were under to support the worshippers of the true God against infidels, and were not satisfied with the assurance that they should not be molested by the intermixture of the processions, which should be strictly confined to opposite sides of the city. The Hindoos were equally tenacious in upholding their rights, and it became necessary to draw out the troops for the prevention of bloodshed.

The ceremonials observed at the celebration of the Mohurrum are not confined to processions out of doors; persons of wealth and respectability having an Imaum-baareh constructed in the interior of their own dwellings. This is usually a square building, containing a hall and other apartments, in which the mourning assemblages during the period of the festival are congregated. It is decorated for the time with all the splendour which the owners can afford. The *tazee* is placed upon the side facing Mecca, under a canopy of velvet or tissue richly embroidered, and near it there is a pul-

pit very handsomely constructed of silver, ivory, ebony, or carved wood, having a flight of stairs covered with an expensive carpeting of broad-cloth, velvet, or cloth of gold. The walls on either side of the *taxee* are covered with banners, the staves being cased with embossed silver, or gold, beautifully chased, and finished at the top with a crest, or the emblem of the sect, a spread hand. The streamers are of silk richly embroidered in gold and silver, and decorated with fringes, cords, and tassels of the same. Representations of the equipments worn by Hossein at Kurbelah are placed upon cushions at the foot of the *taxee*: these consist of a splendid turban, a sword and sword-belt set with precious stones, a highly emblazoned shield, and a bow and arrows beautifully enamelled.

The *taxee* is lighted up by numerous wax candles, and near it are placed offerings of fruit and flowers presented by pious ladies to do honour to the memory of the Imaums. The remainder of the hall is fitted up with considerable splendour, furnished with mirrors which reflect the light from numerous lustres, lamps, and girandoles. Poorer persons are content with less glittering ornaments; and in all, an assemblage is held

twice a day, that in the evening being the most imposing and attractive. The guests are seated round the apartment, the centre of which is occupied by a group of hired mourners, consisting of six or eight persons. These men are usually of large stature and of considerable muscular strength. They are very scantily clothed in a drapery of green cloth, their breasts and heads being perfectly uncovered. A moollah or priest, selected on account of his superior elocution, ascends the pulpit, and proceeds to the recital of a portion of a poem in the Persian language, which contains a detailed account of the persecution and tragic fate of the Imaum. The composition is said to be very pure, and its effect upon the auditory is prodigious. After some well-wrought passage, describing the sufferings of the unhappy princes, the reader pauses, and immediately the mourners on the ground commence beating their breasts and shouting "Hossein! Houssen!" giving themselves such dreadful blows that it seems incredible that human nature should sustain them, until at length they sink exhausted on the ground amid the piercing cries and lamentations of the spectators. As the narrative proceeds, the interest is deepened: cries of wild despair are uttered on all sides, and even

the Christians who may be present cannot always escape the infection or refrain from tears. A part of each day's service consists of a chant in the Hindostanee language, in which the whole assembly join; and the Sheahs end it by standing up and cursing the usurping Caliphs by name, devoting the memory of each offending individual to universal execration. The Soonees hold these solemn assemblies; but their grief at the cruel sufferings of so many estimable members of the prophet's family, does not assume so theatrical, or it may be added, pagan a character. Attired in the deepest mourning, they evince the most profound sorrow; and it is persons of this persuasion who manifest the greatest indignation when there is any risk of their processions being crossed by the heathen revelries of the Hindoos.

The pomps and ceremonies which preceded it are nothing to the grandeur reserved for the display on the last day of the Mohurrum, when the *tazees* are borne to the place of interment. This pageant represents the military cavalcade of the battle of Kurbelah, together with the funeral procession of the young princes, and the wedding retinue of the bride and bridegroom, divorced by death upon their nuptial day. The banners are

carried in advance, the poles being usually surmounted by a crest, composed of an extended hand, which is emblematic of the five holy personages of the prophet's family, and a symbol particularly designating the Sheah sect. Many make a declaration of their religious principles by holding up the hand; the Soonnee displays three fingers only, while the Sheah extends the whole five. The horse of prince Hossein and his camp-equipage appear, furnished with all the attributes of sovereignty; some of the *tazees*, of which there is a great variety, are accompanied by a platform, on which three effigies are placed,—the ass Borak, the animal selected by Mahomet to bear him on his ride to Heaven,—and two houries, the latter, generally speaking, being frightful figures, more closely resembling demons than the idea they are intended to convey of the beauties of the Moslem paradise. The tomb of Cossim, the husband of Hossein's daughter, is honoured by being carried under a canopy; the bridal trays, palanquins, and other paraphernalia, accompany it, and the whole is profusely garlanded with flowers. When numbers of these processions, all composed of the same emblematic devices, differently ornamented, join together, the effect is exceedingly imposing, forming a

spectacle of which it is impossible to give an adequate description. Thousands and tens of thousands are frequently assembled, with long trains of horses, camels, and elephants; a certain number of the two latter are laden with cakes of the finest wheaten bread, which, at every place where the *tazees* are rested, are distributed amongst the populace; large pitchers of sherbet are also provided for the same purpose; and numbers of water-carriers are in full employment, paid by the rich and charitable to administer to the wants of the poor followers of Ali. These processions take the field at break of day, but there are so many pauses for the reading of the poem dedicated to this portion of the history of the events of Kurbelah, and such numerous rehearsals of Hossein's dying scene, that it is night before the commencement of the interment.

Devout Mussulmans walk, on these occasions, with their heads and their feet bare, beating their breasts, and tearing their hair, and throwing ashes over their persons with all the vehemence of the most frantic grief; but many content themselves with a less inconvenient display of sorrow, leaving to hired mourners the task of inciting and inflaming the multitude by their lamentations and

bewailments. The zeal and turbulence of the affliction of Ali's followers are peculiarly offensive to the Soonnees, who, professing to look upon Hossein and Houssein as holy and unfortunate members of the prophet's family, and to regret the circumstances which led to their untimely end, are shocked by the almost idolatrous frenzy displayed by their less orthodox brethren; and the expression of this feeling often leads to serious disturbances, which break out upon the burial of the *tazees*. Private quarrels between the rival sects are frequently reserved for adjustment to this period, when, under pretext of religious zeal, each party may make an assault upon his enemy without exposing the real ground of his enmity: amongst the Mussulman sepoys in the Company's service such feuds are but too common, and it is sometimes found expedient to march the Soonnees off to a distance during the period of the Mohurrum. In a few places which border the Ganges or Jumna, the *tazees* are thrown into the river; but generally there is a large piece of ground set apart for the purpose of the burial. It is rather a curious spectacle to see the tombs themselves consigned to earth, with the same ceremonies which would attend the inhumation of the bodies of deceased persons;

the *tazees* are stripped of their ornaments, and when little is left except the bamboo frames, they are deposited in pits. This ceremony usually takes place by torch-light, the red glare of innumerable flambeaux adding considerably to the wild and picturesque effect of the scene. A *mussaulchee*, or torch-bearer, is, generally speaking, one of the most demoniac-looking apparitions that can be imagined. Those who follow this occupation are a poor and low class of people, burthened with a small quantity of clothing, and that stained and smeared by the greasy implements of their trade; the *mussaul* itself is merely a piece of wood entwined with filthy rags, and fed from a cruise containing a coarse thick oil, which gives out an impure and lurid flame. The swart countenances, dark limbs, and uncouth drapery of men so withered and so wild in their attire as to be easily mistaken for beings of a lower sphere, assume an even fearful aspect under the flickering light of the torches, which they brandish with strange gestures, as they rush with wild halloos along the plains. In such an illumination, the whole pageant becomes confused and indistinct; here and there some bright object catching the light, comes forth—glittering arms, or the blaze of gold and gems; but the

rest is one black phantom,—a moving mass, strange and indefinite, and rendered almost terrific by the shouts of highly-excited men and the continual discharge of musquetry.

CHAPTER VII.

ETAWAH.

In the days of Moghul power, the native city of Etawah was a flourishing place, the abode of Omrahs and grandees belonging to the imperial court; but with the downfal of Moslem dominion it has sunk into insignificance, and possesses few, if any, attractions, excepting to the artist, who cannot fail to admire a splendid ghaut, one of the finest on the river Jumna, and several picturesque buildings, which latter, however, are falling fast into decay. The cantonments in the neighbourhood are peculiarly desolate, and exhibit in full perfection the dreary features of a jungle-station. Upon a wide sandy plain, nearly destitute of trees, half a dozen habitable bungalows lie scattered, intermixed with the ruins of others built for the accommodation of a larger garrison than is now considered necessary for the security of the place, a single wing of a regiment of sepoys being deemed sufficient for the performance of the duties of this me-

lancholy out-post. The civilian attached to it, who discharges the joint office of judge and collector, is seldom resident, preferring any other part of the district; and the few Europeans condemned to linger out their three years of banishment in this wilderness, have ample opportunity to learn how they may contrive to exist upon their own resources. The bungalows of Etawah, though not in their primitive state,—for upon the first occupation of these remote jungles, doors and windows were not considered necessary, a *jaump*, or frame of bamboo covered with grass, answering the purpose of both —are still sufficiently rude to startle persons who have acquired their notions of India from descriptions of the City of Palaces. Heavy ill-glazed doors, smeared over with coarse paint, secure the interiors from the inclemencies of the cold, hot, and rainy seasons. The walls are mean and bare, and where attempts are made to colour them, the daubing of inexperienced workmen is more offensive to the eye than common whitewash. The fastenings of the doors leading to the different apartments, if there be any, are of the rudest description, and the small portion of wood employed is rough, unseasoned, and continually requiring repair.

The intercourse between the brute denizens of

the soil and their human neighbours is of too close a nature to be agreeable. If the doors be left open at night, moveable lattices, styled *jaffrys*, must be substituted, to keep out the wolves and hyenas, which take the liberty of perambulating through the verandahs; the gardens are the haunts of the porcupine, and panthers prowl in the ravines. The *chopper*, or thatch of a bungalow, affords commodious harbour for vermin of every description; but in large stations, which have been long inhabited by Europeans, the wilder tribes, retreating to more desolate places, are rarely seen; squirrels or rats, with an occasional snake or two, form the population of the roof, and are comparatively quiet tenants. In the jungles, the occupants are more numerous and more various; wild cats, *ghosaumps* (a reptile of the lizard tribe as large as a sucking pig), *vis copras*, and others, take up their abode amid the rafters, and make wild work with their battles and their pursuit of prey. These intruders are only divided from the human inhabitants of the bungalow by a cloth, stretched across the top of each room, from wall to wall, and secured by tapes tied in a very ingenious manner behind a projecting cornice: this cloth forms the ceiling, and shuts out the unsightly rafters of the

huge barn above; but it proves a frail and often insufficient barrier; the course of the assailants and the assailed may be distinctly traced upon its surface, which yields with the pressure of the combatants, shewing distinctly the outlines of the various feet. When it becomes a little worn, legs are frequently seen protruding through some aperture, and as the tapes are apt to give way during the rains, there is a chance of the undesired appearance of some hunted animal, which, in its anxiety to escape from its pursuers, falls through a yawning rent into the abyss below. Before the introduction of cloths, snakes and other agreeable visitants often dropped from the bamboos upon the persons of those who might be reposing beneath; but although, where there are no dogs or cats to keep the lower story clear of intruders, the dwellers of the upper regions will seek the ground-floor of their own accord, they cannot so easily descend as heretofore. Notwithstanding the intervention of the cotton canopy, however, there is quite sufficient annoyance without a closer acquaintance with the parties, for night being usually selected for the time of action, sleep is effectually banished by their gambols. The noise is sometimes almost terrific, and nervous persons, females in particular, may fancy that the

whole of the machinery, cloth, fastenings and all, will come down, along with ten thousand combatants, upon their devoted heads. The sparrows in the eaves, alarmed by the hubbub, start from their slumbers, and their chirping and fluttering increase the tumult. In these wild solitudes, individuals of the insect race perform the part of nocturnal disturbers with great vigour and animation. At nightfall, a concert usually commences, in which the treble is sustained by crickets; gifted with lungs far exceeding in power those of the European hearth, while the bass is croaked forth by innumerable toads. The bugle horns of the musquitos are drowned in the dissonance, and the gurgling accompaniment of the musk rats is scarcely to be distinguished. In the midst of this uproar, should sleep, long-wooed, descend at last to rest upon the weary eyelids, it is but too often chased away by the yells of a wandering troop of jackalls, each animal apparently endeavouring to outshriek his neighbour. A quiet night in any part of India is exceedingly difficult of attainment; the natives, who sleep through the heat of the day, protract their vigils far beyond the midnight hour, and, however silent at other periods, are always noisy at night. Parties from adjacent villages patrol the roads, singing; and,

during religious festivals or bridal revelries, every sort of discordant instrument, gongs, and blaring trumpets six feet long, are brought in aid of the shouts of the populace.

Such is the usual character of a night in the jungles, and it requires nerves of no ordinary kind to support its various inflictions. Fortunately, the beds, as they are constructed and placed in India, afford a secure asylum from actual contact with invaders, the many-legged and many-winged host, which give so lively an idea of the plagues of Egypt. The couch occupies the centre of the floor, and is elevated to a considerable height from the ground; the musquito-curtains, which are tightly tucked in all round, though formed of the thinnest and most transparent material, cannot easily be penetrated from without; and though bats may brush them with their wings, lizards innumerable crawl along the walls, and musk-rats skirt round the posts, admission to the interior is nearly impossible: on this account, as well as for the great preservative which they form against malaria, it is advisable to sleep under a musquito-net at all seasons of the year.

The noisome broods nurtured in the desolate places round Etawah, have not yet been taught to

fly from the abode of the European; but to counterbalance the annoyance which their presence occasions, the brighter and more beautiful inhabitants of the jungles fearlessly approach the lonely bungalow. In no other part of India, with the exception of the hill-districts, are more brilliant and interesting specimens of birds and insects to be seen; extremely small brown doves, with pink breasts, appear amid every variety of the common colour, green pigeons, blue jays, crested wood-peckers, together with an infinite number of richly-plumed birds, glowing in purple, scarlet, and yellow, less familiar to unscientific persons, flock around. A naturalist would luxuriate in so ample a field for the pursuit of his studies, and need scarcely go farther than the gardens, to find those feathered wonders, which are still imperfectly described in works upon ornithology. Here the lovely little tailor-bird sews two leaves together, and swings in his odorous nest from the pendulous bough of some low shrub.

The fly-catcher, a very small and slender bird of a bright green, is also an inhabitant of the gardens, which are visited by miniature birds resembling those of paradise, white, and pale brown, with tails composed of two long feathers. Nothing can

be more beautiful than the effect produced by the brilliant colours of those birds, which congregate in large flocks; the ring-necked paroquets, in their evening flight, as the sun declines, shew rich masses of green; and the byahs, or crested-sparrows, whose breasts are of the brightest yellow, look like clouds of gold as they float along.

Numbers of aquatic birds feed upon the shores of the neighbouring Jumna, and the tremendous rush of their wings, as their mighty armies traverse the heavens, joined to other strange and savage sounds, give a painful assurance to those long accustomed to the quietude of sylvan life in England, that they are intruders on the haunts of wild animals, which have never been subjected to the dominion of man. There is one sound which, though not peculiar to the jungles, is more wearying than in more thickly-inhabited places, on account of the extreme loudness of the note, and its never ceasing for a single instant during the day,—the murmuring of doves: the trees are full of them, and my ear, at least, never became reconciled to their continued mourning. At sunset, this sound is hushed, but the brief interval of repose is soon broken by the night-cries already described.

The roads around Etawah, if such they may (by

courtesy) be called, are about the very worst in the world: they are the high-ways leading to the neighbouring stations, Mynpoorie, Futtyghur, Agra, and Cawnpore, and afford no picturesque views within the range of a day's excursion. There is little temptation to drive out in a carriage in the evening, the favourite method of taking air and exercise in India; a few mango-groves, skirting villages surrounded by high walls of mud, probably as a security against the incursions of wild beasts, alone diversify the bare and arid plains, while the ruts threaten dislocation, and the dust, that plague of Hindostan, is nearly suffocating. The gardens afford a more agreeable method of passing the short period of day-light which the climate will permit to be spent in the open air. They are large and well planted; but the *mallees* (gardeners) are extremely ignorant of the European methods of cultivation, not having the same opportunity of acquiring knowledge as at larger stations. The pomegranate is of little value except for its rich red flowers; for the fruit—in consequence, no doubt, of either being badly grafted or not grafted at all—when ripe, is crude and bitter; it is greatly esteemed, however, by the natives, who cover the green fruit with clay, to prevent the depredations of

birds. The pomegranates brought from Persia never appeared to me to merit their celebrity: whether any attempt has been made to improve them, by a graft from the orange, I know not, but I always entertained a wish to make the experiment. Sweet lemons, limes, oranges, and citrons offer, in addition to their superb blossoms and delicious perfume, fruit of the finest quality; and grapes, which are trained in luxuriant arcades, not only give beauty to a somewhat formal plantation, but afford a grateful banquet at a period of the year (the hot winds) in which they are most acceptable.

Amongst the indigenous fruits of these jungles is a wild plum, which has found an entrance into the gardens, and which, if properly cultivated, would produce excellent fruit; in its present state, unfortunately, it is too resinous to be relished by unaccustomed palates. The melons, which grow to a large size, and are abundant in the season, are chiefly procured from native gardens, on the banks of the Jumna, as they flourish on the sands which border that river. Mangos and jacks occupy extensive plantations, exclusive of the gardens, and are left, as well as custard apples, plantains, and guavas, to the cultivation of the natives, the ground

in the neighbourhood of a bungalow being chiefly appropriated to foreign productions.

The seeds of European vegetables are sown after the rainy season, and come to perfection during the cold weather; green peas, cauliflowers, and cos lettuce appear at Christmas, sustaining, without injury, night-frosts which would kill them in their native climes. Either the cultivation is better understood, or the soil is more congenial to these delicate strangers, since they succeed better than the more hardy plants, celery, beet-root, and carrots, which never attain to their proper size, and are frequently deficient in flavour. To watch the progress of the winter-crop of familiar vegetables, and to inspect those less accurately known, cannot fail to be interesting, although the climate will not permit a more active part in the management of a garden.

The oleanders, common all over India, are the pride of the jungles, spreading into large shrubs, and giving out their delicate perfume from clusters of pink and white flowers. The *baubool* also boasts scent of the most exquisite nature, which it breathes from bells of gold; the delicacy of its aroma renders it highly prized by Europeans, who are overpowered by the strong perfume of the jessamine,

and other flowers much in request with the natives. The sensitive plant grows in great abundance in the gardens of Etawah, spreading itself over whole borders, and shewing on a grand scale the peculiar quality whence it derives its name: the touch of a single leaf will occasion those of a whole parterre to close and shrink away, nor will it recover its vigour until several hours after the trial of its sensibility. Equally curious, and less known, is the property of another beautiful inhabitant of these regions; the flowers of a tree of no mean growth arrive to nearly the size of a peony; these flowers blow in the morning, and appear of the purest white, gradually changing to every shade of red, until, as the evening advances, they become of a deep crimson, and falling off at night, are renewed in their bridal attire the following day. When gathered and placed in a vase, they exhibit the same metamorphosis, and it is the amusement of many hours to watch the progress of the first faint tinge, as it deepens into darker and darker hues.

Around every shrub, butterflies of various tints sport and flutter, each species choosing some particular blossoms, appearing as if the flowers themselves had taken flight, and were hovering over the

parent bough: one plant will be surmounted by a galaxy of blue-winged visitants, while the next is radiant with amber or scarlet. Immense winged grasshoppers, whose whole bodies are studded with emeralds which no jeweller can match; shining beetles, bedecked with amethysts and topazes; and others, which look like spots of crimson velvet, join the gay carnival. These lovely creatures disappear with the last sun-beams, and are succeeded by a less desirable race. Huge vampire-bats, measuring four feet from tip to tip of their leathern wings, wheel round in murky circles; owls venture abroad, and the odious musk rat issues from its hole.

The remaining twilight is usually spent upon the *chubootur*, a raised terrace or platform of chunam, generally commanding an extensive prospect. Chairs are placed for the accommodation of the females and their visitors, and the road beneath often presents a very lively scene. Native conveyances of all kinds, and some exceedingly grotesque, pass to and fro; fukeers are conveyed from the city to their residences in the neighbouring villages, in a sort of cage, not larger than a modern hat-box, in which the wonder is how they can contrive to bestow themselves; these miniature litters

are slung on a bamboo, and carried by two men; covered carts drawn by bullocks, camels, and buffaloes returning home, with occasionally an elephant stalking majestically along, are the most common passengers; but native travellers of rank, attended by numerous trains of well-armed dependants, wedding and religious processions, composed of fantastic groups, frequently attract the gazing eye, amusing by their novelty.

As night draws on, packs of jackalls may be dimly descried on the roads, looking like dark phantoms; and even while the bungalow is blazing with lights, the wolf may be seen prowling at a little distance, watching for some unguarded moment to snatch an infant from its mother's lap. Such catastrophes are not uncommon: frequently, while seated at tea, the party has been startled by the shouts of the servants, too late aware of the intruder's presence. Pursued by cries and the clattering of bamboos, the wretch is sometimes known to drop its prey; but in general he succeeds in carrying it off to some inaccessible spot. These occurrences take place just before nightfall, when the appearance of a wolf is not suspected, and if he should be seen he may be mistaken for a pariah dog. When the natives retire to their houses,

every aperture is secured by strong lattices, and none venture to sleep outside who are not capable of protecting themselves. Europeans do not seem to consider wolves as worthy game; when a tiger makes his appearance in the neighbourhood of a cantonment, all the residents, civil and military, are astir, and it seldom happens that he is suffered to escape the crusade which is formed against him; the more ignoble animal is left to the natives, who however, seldom claim the reward given by government of five rupees per head, in consequence of a superstition which prevails amongst them, that wherever a wolf's blood is spilled, the ground becomes barren: this notion is unfortunate, since they display both courage and conduct in the attack of fiercer beasts of prey. No sooner were the yells of two hyenas heard in the cantonments of Etawah, than a party of half-naked men, armed only with bamboos, went up to the lair which they had chosen, and after a severe struggle secured them alive. The victors bound their prizes to bamboos, and carried them round to each bungalow, where of course they received a reward in addition to that given by the judge.

The hyena of a menagerie affords a very faint idea of the savage of the jungles; these creatures,

though severely injured, retained, even in their manacled state, all their native ferocity, unsubdued by long fasting and blows. A gentleman present, anxious to exhibit his skill with the broad-sword, brandished a *tulwur*, with the intention of cutting off their heads: but he was disappointed: one of the expected victims snatched the weapon from his hand, and broke it in pieces in an instant; they were then less ostentatiously despatched.

It is unfortunate that beauty of prospect cannot be combined in India with the more essential conveniences necessary for the performance of military duties; while nothing can be more ugly than the tract marked out for the cantonments of Etawah, the ravines into which it is broken, at a short distance, leading to the Jumna, are exceedingly picturesque, affording many striking landscapes: the sandy winding steeps on either side are richly wooded with the *neem*, the *peepul*, and a species of the palm, a tree which in the Upper Provinces always stands singly, the soil being less congenial than lower grounds near the coast: in these situations, it is more beautiful than when it plants itself in whole groves. Sometimes an opening presents a wide view over wild jungle; at others, it gives glimpses of the Jumna, whose blue waters sparkle

in the beams of the rising or setting sun. These ravines can only be traversed upon horseback, or upon an elephant, and they must be visited by day-break to be seen to advantage.

However beautiful the awakening of nature may be in other parts of the world, its balmy delights can never be so highly appreciated as in the climes of the East, where its contrast to the subduing heat of burning noon, renders it a blessing of inestimable value. The freshness of the morning air, the play of light and shade, which is so agreeable to the eye, the brightness of the foliage, the vivid hue of the flowers opening their variegated clusters to the sun, rife with transient beauty, for evening finds them drooping; the joyous matins of the birds, and the playful gambols of wild animals emerging from their dewy lairs, exhilarate the spirits, and afford the highest gratification to the lover of sylvan scenes. Every tree is tenanted by numerous birds; superb falcons look out from their lofty eyries, and wild peacocks fling their magnificent trains over the lower boughs, ten or twelve being frequently perched upon the same tree. The smaller birds, sparrow-hawks, green pigeons, blue jays, &c. actually crowd the branches; the crow-pheasant whirrs as strange footsteps ap-

proach, and wings his way to deeper solitudes; while flocks of parroquets, upon the slightest disturbance, issue screaming from their woody coverts, and, spreading their emerald plumes, soar up until they melt into the golden sky above. At the early dawn, the panther and the hyena may be seen, sculking along to their dens; the antelope springs up, bounding across the path; the nylghau scours over bush and briar, seeking the distant plain; the porcupine retreats grunting, or stands at bay erecting his quills in wrath at the intrusion; and innumerable smaller animals—the beautiful little blue fox, the civet with its superb brush, and the nimble mungoose—make every nook and corner swarm with life. Gigantic herons stalk along the river's shores; the brahmanee ducks hover gabbling above, and huge alligators bask on the sand-banks, stretched in profound repose, or watching for their prey.

As the jungles recede from the dwellings of man, they become wilder and more savage; large *jheels* (ponds) spread their watery wastes over the low marshes, and are the haunt of millions of living creatures. Small hunting parties frequently encamp during the cold season on the banks of these glassy pools, where, in addition to every descrip-

tion of smaller game, the wild boar, though not so common as in Bengal, may be ridden down and speared by the expert sportsman. The native hunters (*shikarrees*) go out at all periods of the year, and are frequently retained in European establishments for the purpose of ensuring regular supplies for the table.

The equipments of these men would astonish the hero of a hundred *battus;* they are armed with an old rusty clumsy matchlock, which they never fire except when certain of their quarry, making up in skill and patience for the inefficiency of their weapons. They go out alone, and never return empty-handed; and young men desirous of obtaining good sport, and of securing the shy and rare beasts of chase, prefer seeking their game attended by one of these men to joining larger parties, who are frequently disappointed of the nobler species, and are compelled to be contented with snippets.

The nylghau, when stall-fed, is more esteemed in India than it deserves, as the flesh resembles coarse beef, and when made into hams is apt to crumble; smaller venison, on the contrary, is not prized according to its merits, Europeans preferring the half-domesticated tenant of an English

park to the wild flavour of the dweller in the jungles.

There is the same prejudice against pea-chicks, which few are aware are considered a dainty at home (the grand criterion of Anglo-Indians), and they are neglected, though affording an excellent substitute for turkeys, which are dear and over-fed. This American importation does not thrive very well in India; so many die before they arrive at maturity, that the native breeders are obliged to put a high price upon the survivors, which are often sold for fifteen rupees each: they are generally encumbered with fat, and are in fact vastly inferior to young pea-fowl, which combine the flavour of the pheasant with the juiciness of the turkey. Guinea-fowl find a more congenial climate in India, and in many places run wild and breed in the woods. Common poultry also are found there in an untamed state; they go under the denomination of jungle-fowl, and are quite equal to any feathered game which is brought to table.

The river Jumna is well-stocked with fish, and during the rainy season numerous nullahs supply Etawah with many excellent sorts, including the finest, though not the largest, prawns to be had in India. The mutton and beef are of the best quality,

the former being usually an appendage to each resident's farm. Native butchers feed cattle and sheep for European consumption, taking care, however, not to kill the former until all the joints shall be bespoken. A family who entertain, will not find a whole bullock too much for their own use, slaughtered at Christmas; and the salting pieces reserved for the hot weather, when cured by experienced hands, will keep good for a whole year. The expedient in less favourable seasons to procure salt-beef, when fresh killed, is to boil it in strong brine, and serve it up the same day.

There is no regular supply of European articles at Etawah; the residents are not sufficiently numerous to encourage a native to traffic in beer, wine, brandy, cheese, &c.; these things, together with tea and coffee, several kind of spices, English pickles, and English sauces, must be procured from Cawnpore, a distance of ninety-six miles. A crash of glass or crockery cannot be repaired without recourse to the same emporium, excepting now and then, when an ambulatory magazine makes its appearance, or the *dandies* belonging to boats which have ascended the Ganges from Calcutta, hawk about small investments, which they have either stolen, or purchased for almost nothing at an auc-

darkened with dust, the sun is obscured, and a London fog cannot more effectually exclude the prospect. The birds are dreadful sufferers at this season; their wings droop, and their bills are open as if gasping for breath; all animals are more or less affected, and especially those which have been imported to the country. Our Persian cats were wont to coil themselves round the jars of water in the bathing-rooms, and to lie on the wet grass between the tatties, where they frequently received a sprinkling from the copious libations poured upon the frames without. If, tired of confinement, they ventured into the verandah, they would speedily return, looking quite aghast at the warm reception they had met with abroad.

The breaking-up of the hot winds affords a magnificent spectacle; they depart in wrath, after a tremendous conflict with opposing elements. The approaching strife is made known by a cloud, or rather a wall of dust, which appears at the extremity of the horizon, becoming more lofty as it advances. The air is sultry and still, for the wind, which is tearing up the sand as it rushes along, is not felt in front of the billowy masses, whose mighty ramparts gather strength as they spread; at length the plain is surrounded, and the sky

becomes as murk as midnight. Then the enchained thunder breaks forth; but its most awful peals are scarcely heard in the deep roar of the tempest; burst succeeds to burst, each more wild and furious than the former; the forked lightnings flash in vain, for the dust, which is as thick as snow, flings an impenetrable veil around them. The wind, having spent itself in a final effort, suddenly subsides, and the dust is as speedily dispersed by torrents of rain, which in a very short time flood the whole country. The *tatties* are immediately thrown down, and though they may have previously rendered shawls necessary, the relief experienced when breathing the fresh air of heaven, instead of that produced by artificial means, is indescribable. All the animal creation appear to be endued with fresh life and vigour, as they inhale the cooling breezes; the songs of the birds are heard again, and flocks and herds come forth rejoicing. Before the watery pools have penetrated into the parched earth, so rapid is the growth of vegetation, patches of green appear along the plain, and those who take up their posts in the verandah for an hour or two, may literally see the grass grow. In the course of a single day, the sandy hillocks will be covered with verdure,

tion. On these occasions, excellent bargains are procured; boxes of eau-de-cologne, containing six bottles, being sold for a rupee, and anchovy-paste, mushroom-ketchup, &c. at less than the retail price in England; the true value of Brandy or Hollands is better known, and these articles are seldom sold much below the current-price at Cawnpore. The female residents of Etawah must depend entirely upon their own stores, for they cannot purchase a single yard of ribbon, and are frequently in great distress for such trifling articles as pins, needles, and thread; shoes, gloves, everything in fact belonging to the wardrobe, must be procured from Cawnpore, the metropolis of the Upper Provinces.

In the cold season, strings of camels laden with the rich productions of Thibet and Persia pass on their way to Benares and Patna; some are freighted with costly merchandize,—shawls, carpets, and gems; others carry less precious articles,—apples, *kistmists* (raisins), dried apricots, pomegranates, grapes, and pistachio-nuts. Upon the necks of these camels, beautiful little Persian kittens are seen seated, the venders finding a ready sale for their live cargo both at European and native houses. These silken-haired bushy-tailed cats make the prettiest and the most useful pets of an Indian establishment; they

are capital mousers, and will attack snakes and the larger kind of lizards; a bungalow, tenanted by one of these long-furred specimens of the feline race and a terrier-dog, will soon be cleared of vermin. They are in great esteem all over the country, and will fetch from eight to fifty rupees, the latter price being offered at Calcutta, where they are not so easily procured as in the upper country. The common cat of Hindostan is exceedingly ugly when unmixed with foreign breeds; but there is a very pretty and curious variety in the Indian islands, with a sleek coat and a short flat tail, square at the end. The Persian merchants also bring very beautiful greyhounds to India for sale, but they are always extremely high-priced, being much in request; the native, or pariah dogs, are a degenerate and useless race of mongrels, and infinite care is taken to preserve foreign breeds, which require great attention, the climate being very unfavourable to all except the hardiest sort of terriers.

The unsheltered site of Etawah affords ample opportunity for the contemplation of the changes of the atmosphere; in no part of India do the hot winds blow with greater fury. This terrible visitation takes place in March, and continues during the

whole of April and May. The wind usually rises about eight o'clock in the morning, and if coming from the right point (the west), and strong enough to cause sufficient evaporation, the *tatties* are put up—thick mats, made of the roots of a fragrant grass *(cuscus)*, upon bamboo-frames, fitting into the doors or windows; all the apertures in a contrary direction being closely shut. These *tatties* are kept constantly wet, by men employed to throw water upon them on the outside, and the wind which comes through them is changed into a rush of cold air, so cold sometimes as to oblige the party within to put on additional clothing. While the wind continues steady, the only inconveniences to be borne are the darkness—that second plague of Egypt, common to Indian houses—and the confinement; for those who venture abroad pay dearly for their temerity: the atmosphere of a gasometer in full operation might as easily be endured; exhaustion speedily follows, the breath and limbs fail, and if long exposed to the scorching air, the skin will peel off. Yet this is the period chosen by the natives for their journies and revelries; they cover their faces with a cloth, and with this simple precaution brave the fiercest blasts of the simoom. These winds usually subside at sunset, though they some-

times blow to a later hour, and are known to continue all night. If they should change to the eastward, the *tatties* are useless, producing only a hot damp steam. In this event, the only means of mitigating the heat is to exclude the wind by filling up the crevicies, hanging thick curtains *(purdahs)* over the doors, and setting all the *punkahs* in motion: inefficient expedients, for, in despite of all, the atmosphere is scarcely bearable; excessive and continual thirst, languor of the most painful nature, and irritability produced by the prickly heat, render existence almost insupportable. Every article of furniture is burning to the touch; the hardest wood, if not well covered with blankets, will split with a report like that of a pistol, and linen taken from the drawers appears as if just removed from a kitchen fire. The nights are terrible; every apartment being heated to excess, each may be compared to a large oven, in which M. Chaubert alone could repose at ease. Gentlemen usually have their beds placed in the verandahs, or on the *chubootur*, as they incur little risk in sleeping in the open air, at a season in which no dews fall, and there is scarcely any variation in the thermometer. Tornadoes are frequent during the hot winds; while they last, the skies, though cloudless, are

and in a very short time the grass becomes high and rank. While the clouds are actually pouring out their liquid treasures, the rainy season is not unpleasant; *punkahs* may be dispensed with, and the venetians may be removed without danger of being blinded by the glare; but the intervals between the showers are excessively hot, and the frequent changes of the atmosphere, and the malaria arising from the surrounding marshes, render it dreadfully unhealthy. Fever and ague are the common complaints; the former is often fatal, and the utmost vigilance is requisite to avoid the danger to which both natives and Europeans are continually exposed, since infection is frequently brought from distant places by currents of air.

The effects of these partial tornadoes is very curious; they are almost seen to traverse the plain, their course resembling that of a swollen river or a lava-flood. Persons may occupy a position at a very short distance from the spot in which the tempest is raging without feeling the agitation of the elements, and behold at ease the devastation which they cause; trees are torn up by the roots, roofs are stripped of their tiles, and the choppers of out-houses fly off like gigantic birds, being carried several yards beyond the place where they

originally stood. I once witnessed a very amusing scene of this nature: the servants of a neighbour, anxious to preserve their master's property, on the roof of the cook-room taking wing, rushed out of their houses, and with great vigour and alacrity seized the ends of the flying bamboos ere they reached the ground, running along with their canopy until its impetus had ceased, and then restoring it to the deserted walls on which it had formerly rested.

The rains usually continue from the first or second week in June until the middle of October, and in some seasons are extremely violent; the desolation on the rivers' banks is frightful; whole villages are plunged into the flood, a catastrophe seldom attended by loss of life, as the natives usually have timely warning, and escape with their goods and chattels, taking care, however, like the Sicilians in the neighbourhood of Ætna, to build again in places equally exposed to inundation. Bungalows often sustain considerable damage during a very wet season; the pillars of the verandahs sink and lose their perpendicular, and out-offices and servants' houses are frequently washed away, leaving nothing but fragments of mud-walls behind. The thunder and lightning which accompany these cataracts are terrific, filling the heavens

with blue and crimson light, and carrying death into the plains, where herdsmen and shepherds frequently perish. The final fall is generally the heaviest, lasting three or four days, and bringing cold weather along with it. A sudden and grateful change of climate takes place upon the departure of the rains; the sun is deprived of its noxious power, and renders the heavens bright without being sultry; exercise may be taken on foot until ten o'clock in the day, in the Upper Provinces, and in a carriage at all times without inconvenience. While the weather is cloudy (generally during a few days in December), it is exceedingly practicable to walk out in the middle of the day in Etawah, and higher up, at Kurnaul, this gratification may be enjoyed for two months.

The climate all over India, even in Bengal, is delightful from October until March; all is brightness and beauty outside the house; summer gardens glow with myriads of flowers, native and exotic, while within, fires, especially in the evening, are acceptable, and blankets are necessary to ward off the inclemencies of the night. This is the gay season, and even Etawah loses part of its dulness, being visited by regiments on their march to and from other stations, who sometimes make it their

halting-place for a couple of days. A canvas city starts up, as if by magic, on the bare plain; bullocks, camels, horses, and elephants are grouped amid the tents; sheep, cows, goats, and poultry, following the fortunes of their owners, occupy temporary farm-yards in the rear; and bazaars are opened for the sale of all the necessaries of life. At day-break, the striking of tent-pins, the neighing of horses, the lowing of herds, and the grunt of the camels, mixed with the long roll of the drums and bugle-calls, give warning that the march is about to commence; and when the sun has risen, troops of hideous white vultures are seen feeding on the offal, where all the day before had been crowd and bustle.

CHAPTER VIII.

INDIAN SPORTS.

HAPPY are those young men who take out with them to India the tastes and habits of a scholar or of a sportsman, though perhaps neither can be carried to excess, without danger, in a climate almost equally hostile to mental and to bodily exertion. Moderation, either in study or in field-sports, requires more self-command than is usually practised by the young and enthusiastic; and the latter pursuit, especially, is so fascinating, as to beguile veterans into rash enterprizes, which could only be excusable in the days of boyhood. Formerly almost all the European residents of India were mighty hunters; but, in the present day, though there are quite enough to keep up their ancient reputation, the slaughter of wild animals is not so general, or so absorbing a passion as it used to be, when the Company's territories were surrounded by the courts of native princes, who were accustomed to take the field against the furred and feathered rangers of the

forest, with all the pomp and circumstance of war. Parties of gentlemen from Calcutta are in the habit of spending a part of the cold season amid the wildest jungles of Bengal; but their *cortège*, though exceedingly numerous, and the havoc they make, though sufficiently great to satisfy any reasonable person, are nothing compared to the displays of former times. The amusements of Cossim Ally Khan, the nawab of Bengal, in 1761, afford a strong contrast to the habits and pursuits of his degenerate representatives. The fame of his exploits still survives in the memory of the people, and their scenes are pointed out with no small degree of exultation.

In one of his grand hunting-parties, his retinue, including a body-guard of cavalry, consisted of not fewer than twenty thousand persons. The officers of his army and household, and his European guests, were conveyed to the theatre of action on elephants, camels, and horses, or in palanquins. The hunters were armed with spears, bows, arrows, and matchlocks, and they were accompanied by greyhounds, hawks, and cheetahs. The scene of the chase was one of the most beautiful which the splendid landscapes of Bengal can present. Between the Ganges and one of the ranges of hills,

which spread themselves along the frontiers of the province, there is a wide tract of country, diversified with rocks, woods, lakes, heaths, and rivulets, and abounding with every sort of game; hither the nawab and his party repaired, and, forming an extensive line, roused up the denizens of the field as they advanced, and letting the hawks fly as the wild-fowl sprang up, and loosening the greyhounds and cheetahs upon the deer; the spear and match-lock-men attacked the wild hogs; while others, mounted upon elephants, marked out the still more ferocious animals, and brought them down with a two-ounce ball. The nawab was one of the most active of the party; sometimes he rode in an open palanquin, carried on the shoulders of eight bearers, with his shield, sword, gun, bow and quiver, lying beside him; sometimes he mounted on horseback, and at others, where the grass and bushes were high, he got upon an elephant. After the diversion had been carried on for three or four hours and to the distance of twelve miles, the nawab and his guests repaired to their encampment, where a sumptuous repast was served up for their entertainment.

Hunting-parties, upon so grand a scale, are now rare in India, even amongst native princes; and

though the imagination can scarcely fail to be dazzled by an assemblage of twenty thousand men, with their picturesque accompaniments of stud and equipage, scouring through the woods, and across the plains, in search of the noblest species of game, such scenes of barbaric splendour would soon become exceedingly tiresome. The truest enjoyment of field-sports is offered to small parties of Europeans, who blend intellectual tastes with the love of the chase; who, while sojourning in the forest, delight to make themselves acquainted with the manners and habits of its wild tribes, and who, not entirely bent upon butchery, vary their occupations by devoting themselves to botanical or geological pursuits.

The period usually chosen for these excursions is from the beginning of November until the end of February, a season in which the climate of Hindostan is delightfully temperate, the air perfectly serene, and the sky often without a cloud. Some verdant spot, shaded by adjacent groves, and watered by a small lake or rivulet, is selected for the encampment. An Indian jungle offers so great a variety of beauties, that there is no difficulty in the selection of an appropriate scene. A natural lawn, sloping down to a broad expanse of water,

shaded by palm-trees, whose graceful, tufted foliage forms so striking a feature in Oriental scenery, or beneath the canopy of the cathedral-like banian, stretching its long aisles in verdant pomp along the plain, or in the neighbourhood of a mosque, pagoda, or stately tomb, whose numerous recesses and apartments offer excellent accommodation for such followers of the party as are not provided with other shelter. There is no danger of being in want of any of the comforts and conveniences of life, during a sojourn in wildernesses, perchance as yet untrodden by the foot of man, or so long deserted as to leave no traces of human occupation. Wherever a party of this kind establishes itself, it will be followed by native shopkeepers, who make themselves very comfortable in a bivouac beneath the trees, and supply the encampment with every necessary which the servants and cattle may require. European stores are, of course, laid in by the *khansamahs* of the different gentlemen, and unless the sportsmen and their fair companions,—for ladies delight in such expeditions,—determine upon living entirely upon game, sheep and poultry are brought to stock a farm-yard, rendered impervious to the attacks of savage beasts. Every part of the surrounding country swarms with animal life; in the

Upper Provinces, insects are not very troublesome during the cold weather, nor are reptiles so much upon the alert; in Bengal, however, the cold is never sufficiently severe to paralyze the mosquitoes, which are said then to sting more sharply, and to cherish a more insatiate appetite than during the sultry part of the year. The inconveniences arising from too intimate a connection with lizards, spiders, and even less welcome guests, are more than counterbalanced by the gratification which inquisitive minds derive from the various novelties which present themselves upon every side. The majestic appearance of the trees, many of them covered with large lustrous flowers, or garlanded with creepers, which attain to an enormous size, must delight all who possess a taste for sylvan scenery. In some of the jungles of India, the giant parasites of the soil appear, as they stretch themselves from tree to tree, like immense boa-constrictors, and the blossoms they put forth, at intervals, are so large, and cluster so thickly together, as to suggest the idea of baskets of flowers hanging from a festoon: the underwood is frequently formed of richly-flowering plants; the *corinda*, which is fragrant even to satiety, and scarcely bearable in any confined place, loading the air with perfume; while the *dhag*, with

its fine, wide, dark-green leaf, and splendid crimson vase-like flowers, contrasts beautifully with other forest-trees, bearing white blossoms, smaller but resembling those of the camellia japonica.

So magnificent a solitude would in itself afford a very great degree of pleasure and interest to contemplative minds; but both are heightened by the living objects which give animation to the scene. Though wild hogs are most abundant in plantations of sugar-cane, which is their favourite food, and which imparts to their flesh the delicious flavour so highly esteemed by epicures, they are also to be found in the wildest and most uncultivated tracts. The roebuck, musk and hog-deer, conceal themselves amidst the thickest heath and herbage, and the antelopes and large deer rove over the plains. All these animals, however, seek the thickets occasionally, and they are fond of resorting to the tall coarse grass, which attains to the rankest luxuriance in the levels of the jungle, and is the favourite lair of the tiger and the hyæna. Panthers, leopards, bears, and the beautiful tiger-cat, are likewise inhabitants of these hiding-place; and in the neighbourhood of Rajmhal, the Deyra Dhoon, the Terraie, &c., rhinoceroses and wild buffaloes are added to the list. Amid the smaller and more

harmless creatures which haunt the jungle, one of the prettiest and most interesting is the fox; its size scarcely exceeds that of an English hare; the limbs are slender, and it is delicately furred with soft hair, generally of a bluish grey. It has not the offensive smell of the reynard of Europe, its food being principally grain, vegetables, and fruit. The passion of the fox for grapes was by no means a flight of fancy on the part of our old friend Æsop, who shewed himself well acquainted with the habits of the Asiatic species. They burrow in holes, and prefer the side of a hillock, where the grass is short and smooth, to the wood; and there they may be seen in the morning and after sunset, frisking about and playing with their young. They afford excellent sport when hunted; for, though not strong or persevering, they are fleet and flexible, and make many efforts (by winding in successive evolutions) to escape their pursuers. Jackals are almost as common as crows, in every part of India; but notwithstanding their numbers, and the great desire which they evince to make themselves heard, there is some difficulty in getting a sight of them, except when the moon is up, and then they seek concealment in the shadows, gliding along under covert, with a stealthy movement, like some dark

phantom, or when the prospect of a banquet upon some newly-slain victim lures them from their retreat in open day.

However bare and solitary the place may be, the instant any animal falls to the ground, exhausted by wounds or disease, it is immediately surrounded by troops of two-legged and four-footed cormorants, which do not await its last gasp to commence their attack: four or five hundred vultures will be assembled, in an incredibly short period of time, in places where they are not usually to be found, whenever a bullock or deer has fallen a sacrifice to a tiger. Upon these occasions, if the rightful master of the feast should be in the neighbourhood, and choosing, as often is the case, to delay his meal until sunset, the jackals and the vultures, cowering close to the spot, await with great patience the moment in which they may commence their operations without giving offence, taking care to remove to a respectful distance, when the tiger, who is said to approach the dead carcass in the same cautious and crouching manner as when endeavouring to steal upon living prey, makes his appearance upon the scene.

It is affirmed that, wherever tigers roam or couch, multitudes of birds collect and hover about them,

screaming and crying, as if to create an alarm; and it is also said that peacocks are particularly allured by the tawny monarch of the wood, and that, when he is perceived by a flock, they will advance towards him immediately, and begin, with their usual ostentatious pomp, to strut around him, their wings fluttering, their feathers quivering, and their tails bristly and expanded *. Native sportsmen, who always prefer stratagem to open war, take advantage of this predilection, and painting a brown cloth screen, about six feet square, with black spots or streaks, advance under its cover, which is placed fronting the sun. The pea-fowl either approaches the lure, or suffers the fowlers, who are concealed behind it, to draw near enough to their mark to be quite certain of not missing it. A hole in the canvas enables them to take an accurate aim, and the *ruse* is always successful.

Strange instances of the fascination of animals are recorded, by which it would appear, that, under its influence, the most active and timid rush into the danger which we should suppose they would be most anxious to avoid. The power which serpents possess over birds, squirrels, &c., is well

* Some writers aver that the Indian peacocks never spread their tails.

known; and those who have visited unfrequented places have had opportunities of witnessing the effect of novel sights upon the shyest denizens of the waste.

When the line of march of large bodies of troops has led across sequestered plains, they have attracted the attention of herds of deer grazing in the neighbourhood. When startled by the humming murmuring noise made by the soldiers in passing, they have stood for some time staring, and apparently aghast with astonishment, with their eyes fixed upon the progressive files, whose glaring red uniforms and glittering muskets might well inspire them with fear. At length, in his bewilderment, the leading stag, striking the ground, tossing his antlers, and snorting loudly, has rushed forward across the ranks, followed by the whole herd, to the utter dismay and confusion of the soldiers, the frightened deer bounding over the heads of those files who were taken too much by surprise to halt, and make way for them. Incidents of a similar nature have occurred more than once, and they serve to give interest and variety to a march across some of those apparently boundless plains, which stretch to the horizon on every side, and are not of unfrequent occurrence in the thinly-peopled districts of Hindostan.

The birds, in many places, are to be seen literally in myriads; water-fowl especially congregate in the greatest abundance and variety; their numbers almost covering the lakes and *jheels*, when resting upon the water; and forming thick clouds, when, upon any alarm, they rise simultaneously upon the wing. The margin of the stream is surrounded by storks and cranes. The species of both are numerous, and the gracefulness of the shape of many can only be exceeded by the beauty of their plumage. The crested heron, whose snow-white tuft is an emblem of sovereignty in India, and the only feather which the religious prejudices of the Rajpoot princes permit them to wear, is one of the loveliest creatures imaginable; its eyes are of bright scarlet, and amidst many competitors in beauty, it shines conspicuous.

There are no pheasants in the woods of Bengal or Behar; but they are found upon the confines of Assam, Chittagong, and the ranges of the Himalaya. In Nepaul, and particularly about the Morung, they are large and beautiful, more especially the golden, the burnished, the spotted, and the azure, together with the brown argus-eyed pheasant. There are several varieties of pea-fowl, black, white, and grey, in addition to the common sort;

and though there are some districts in India, styled *par* distinction, *More-bunje*, "the place of peacocks," they are so common all over the country, that it would be almost difficult to find a woodland haunt where they do not abound. They are certainly not prized in India according to their merits, either as an ornamental appendage, or as an addition to the board. Some Europeans have only been reconciled to their admission at table, by an account which has reached them of their appearance at the Lord Mayor's state-dinners in London: Anglo-Indians, generally speaking, being exceedingly unwilling to judge for themselves where their gastronimic taste can be called in question. Nevertheless, those who, where native productions are worthy of praise, entertain no absurd prejudices in favour of exotics, are glad to have an opportunity of repeating the justly-merited claims to distinction of the pea-chick, as an article of provender.

High as are the merits of this fowl, however, in its happy combination of the game-flavour of the pheasant with the juiciness of the turkey, it must hide its diminished head before the glories of the florikin; the flanderkin of feudal banquets, and the peacock's early rival at the baronial feasts of

the Montacutes and the Courtenayes. The florikin is nearly, if not quite, as large as a turkey, and the plumage on the back is not unlike that which distinguishes the monarch of our poultry-yard: but the cock is furnished with a much more splendid crest. A tuft of fine black velvet feathers, which usually lies smooth upon the back of the head, can be erected at pleasure, and, when spread out, adds greatly to the noble appearance of the bird. Its favourite harbour is in the natural pastures which edge the extremities of swamps, and the borders of lakes, always in the neighbourhood of marshy ground, but not far distant from the uplands. In consequence of this choice of situation, and the variety of food which it presents, its flesh acquires a peculiarity unknown to other birds; the legs, which are white, resemble in flavour those of a pheasant, while the breast and the wings bear a similarity to the wild-duck: epicures pronounce the whole to be delicate, savoury, and juicy beyond all comparison. This fine bird is not sufficiently common in India to pall upon the appetite; it is found in Bengal and in the neighbourhood of the hill-districts; but, in many parts of the Upper Provinces, it will be searched for in vain.

The woodcock is not an inhabitant of southern

Asia, but snipes are exceedingly abundant; and there is one variety, the painted snipe, which attains a very large size, and which compensates for the absence of the former-mentioned bird.

The jungle-fowl performs the same duty for the pheasants, where they are not to be found; and in some places the speckled poultry of Guinea, which have wandered into the woods, and bred there, are discovered in a wild state. It is one of the most agreeable, amid the numerous enjoyments of forest scenery, to see the hens and chickens sculking and scudding between the bushes, and to hear the crowing of the jungle cock. The black and the rock partridge form very acceptable adjuncts to the table, whilst every variety of pigeons may be had for the trouble of killing them.

A camp-dinner for a hunting party is not only an exhilarating, but a very interesting meal. The most elaborate *pic-nic* provided for a *fête champêtre* in England, where people are put to all sorts of inconveniences, and must content themselves with a cold collation, is nothing to the luxurious displays of cookery performed in the open air in India. Under the shelter of some brushwood, the spits turn merrily and rapidly over charcoal fires; an oven is constructed for the baking-department, and

all the beneficial effect of hot hearths, for stews and other savoury compounds, are produced with the greatest ease and facility. All that can be attainable within the range of fifty or sixty miles, is brought into the camp upon the heads of *coolies*, glad to earn a few *pice* for their daily bread, and indifferent to the obstructions which may beset their path. The multitude of followers, attendant even upon a small encampment, precludes the possibility of any dreary or desolate feeling; the habits of the people are in unison with the scene; they are quite as happy under the umbrageous and odoriferous canopy of a tope, as they would be in the marble chambers of a palace. A gipsey-life appears to afford them the truest enjoyment; and the scattered groups, which they afford in the glades and openings of the forest, their blazing fires, cheerful songs, and the majestic and picturesque forms of the elephants and camels glancing between the trees, make up a panorama, which the eye of taste can scarcely tire of contemplating, and which, once seen, can never be forgotten.

Living in a jungle-encampment presents the best opportunity of becoming acquainted with the habits and manners of the elephant, which its domestication can permit. The *mahouts* live in the most

intimate association with the huge animals entrusted to their care; they have each an assistant *cooly*, part of whose business it is to prepare and bake the cakes for the evening meal. A fourth of the number he appropriates to himself, after going through the ceremony of asking the elephant's leave, a piece of etiquette performed in dumb-show, and which the sagacious animal seems perfectly to comprehend. The *cooly* feeds his companion, standing under the trunk, and putting each morsel into his mouth; an act of supererogation, but one in which native courtesy, or as it may be called officious zeal, delights, men as well as elephants being obliged to submit to more attendance than they require.

The *khidmutgars* who wait at table, will stir the tea for their masters, and would cut the meat upon their plates, if permitted to shew their diligence by such minute attentions Though the gift of speech is denied to the elephant, he not only appears to understand all that is said to him by those with whom he is intimately acquainted, but also to possess the power of making his own sentiments and opinions known. He can be incited to extraordinary attempts by praises and by promises; and when sweetmeats, of which he is inordinately

fond, are held out to him, as the reward of successful exertion, he cannot be disappointed of the expected treat without danger.

The *mahouts* converse with their charges as if they were rational beings; perhaps the difference in intellectual acquirements is not very great between them, and where a strong friendship has been contracted, the elephant will refuse to admit of a successor in the office. Upon the dismissal of his keeper, an elephant, which had always been exceedingly gentle and tractable, suddenly changed its character and became unmanageable. Vain were all the efforts made to soothe and reconcile it to its new associates. After the struggle of several weeks, the attempt was given up; and the discharged servant being again re-established in his office, the elephant re-assumed its former demeanour, and returned quietly to its duty.

Elephants, though sometimes tempted to fly the abodes of man, and roam in freedom through the wilderness, never forget those persons to whom they have been attached during their state of servitude. One, which had rejoined a wild herd, when encountered by a hunting party, which was accompanied by the *mahout* who had formerly had the charge of him, suffered the man to mount upon his

neck, and, notwithstanding the experience he had gained of the sweets of liberty, returned at once to all his old habits. They are subject, however, at least a few, whose tempers are not particularly good, to fits of caprice and ferocity. It is astonishing with what ease and dexterity they can hook in, with that unwieldly-looking limb, the hind-leg, any object with which it comes in contact. Upon some slight provocation, an elephant has been known to ensnare the unfortunate *cooly* in attendance in this manner, and it is an expedient which is resorted to with infinite effect upon the attack of a tiger in the rear: the beast is speedily kicked to death, when once he is drawn within the range of those enormous feet.

The courage of the elephant is also liable to ebbs and flows: sometimes, at the sight of danger, especially on the sudden appearance of a tiger, he will take to flight, rushing wildly through the woods, and endangering the safety of the hunters on his back, by the violent collision of the howdah against the branches of the trees; at other times, he will run into the contrary extreme, and charge upon the tawny brute, by falling on his knees, and endeavouring to pin the tiger down with his tusks. This operation, which renders the howdah a very

untenable position, is often followed by another of a still more hazardous nature; the elephant is apt to roll over upon its side, in order to crush the foe by its weight, and in this event the sportsman has a good chance of being thrown into the clutches of the tiger, while all the guns go overboard as a matter of course. The courage of an elephant should be of a passive nature; and those whose good qualities have been improved by training, stand firm as a rock, sustaining the first burst of a tiger, uproused from his repose, with imperturbable coolness.

When an elephant has exhibited repeated proofs of cowardice, its dastardly conduct is punished by the degradation of being reduced from the honour of conveying the castle on its back, to the burthen of the baggage. It is not insensible to this disgrace, nor will a caparisoned elephant deign to associate with its brethren of the pad. No animal is better acquainted with its claims to distinction, or prouder of the splendour of its array; and the difference of the bearing between those decked in flowing jhools, richly bordered with gold, and bearing the silver howdah, or canopied ambarry on their backs, and the humble beast of burthen, whose housings are of the meanest description, and

whose load confers neither honour nor dignity, is very striking.

The care which elephants take of their trunks, in an encounter with wild beasts, shews how conscious they are of the value of that important instrument; sometimes they will erect it over their heads like a horn, and at others pack it into the smallest possible compass.

The elephant's partiality for sweetmeats has been already noticed; it is acquired in plantations of sugar-cane, and is universal. A curious instance of this attachment to confectionary, and the method pursued to gratify it by an elephant in its savage state, is upon record. It chanced that a *cooly*, laden with jaggery, a coarse preparation of sugar, was surprised in a narrow pass, in the kingdom of Candy, by a wild elephant. The poor fellow, intent upon saving his life, threw down the burthen, which the elephant devoured, and being well pleased with the repast, determined not to allow any person egress or regress who did not provide him with a similar banquet. The pass occurred upon one of the principal thoroughfares to the capital, and the elephant, taking up a formidable position at the entrance, obliged every passenger to pay tribute. It soon became generally

known that a donation of jaggery would ensure safe conduct through the guarded portal, and no one presumed to attempt the passage without the expected offering.

The elephant is fond of petting and protecting some inferior animal; it often takes a fancy to a little dog, and the latter, speedily becoming acquainted with the value of such a friend and ally, indulges himself in all sorts of impertinences. His post, a very secure one, under the shelter of the elephant's body, enables him to attack and annoy anything that happens to come in his way; he rushes out to the assault, and when likely to get the worst in the encounter, flies back to his place of refuge, and barks defiance at his adversaries. Sometimes the *sarus*, a tall bird of the crane species, which is often domesticated in an Indian compound, is taken into favour; but instances of similar friendship, between animals of very different habits and species, are not at all uncommon. A terrier-dog, a Persian cat, and an antelope, brought up together in the family of an officer, who was accustomed to divide his caresses amongst them, lived with each other in the greatest harmony and affection. During his residence in Calcutta, he was in the habit of spending the whole morning

abroad, and of returning about sun-set to dress. His four-footed favourites were acquainted with the hour in which they might expect to see him, and the trio always came in a body to meet and give him welcome: the cat cared nothing about change of place, being perfectly satisfied to accompany her master in all his travels, and feeling quite at home wherever he and the dog were to be found.

A party of Europeans, encamping in a jungle, will speedily discover their powers of attraction by the number of carrion-birds drawn to the spot by the scent of the slaughter in their farm-yard. The acuteness of the smell of these creatures has already been remarked; at the most extraordinary distance, they seem to be perfectly acquainted with every matter which can interest them, and solitary bungalows, where, on ordinary occasions, the kites and crows are allowed to collect the offal unmolested, will be certain of a visit from vultures, whenever anything worthy of attention is to be had.

The *argeelah*, or butcher-bird, though sometimes inhabiting solitary places, prefers a large cantonment to the jungle; they are always to be seen where European soldiers are quartered, but

scarcely think it worth their while to visit small stations garrisoned by native troops, the few English officers in command not killing enough provision to satisfy their inordinate appetites. Their nests are, however, almost invariably found in remote and thinly-peopled tracts; the country retirement, at the breeding-season, for the fashionable visitants of the metropolis of Bengal, being the neighbourhood of Commercolly. It is not generally known, that the marabout feathers, by some supposed to be the tribute of the paddy-goose, are in fact furnished by this disgusting-looking animal, whose coarse ragged attire gives no promise of the delicate beauty of the plumes so much in esteem in France and England. They grow in a tuft under the tail, and are not visible except upon close inspection. The men who get their bread by the sale of these feathers, conceal the fact as much as possible, under the idea that it would deteriorate their value. As the *argeelah* is protected by law in Calcutta, the people who collect the plumes, visit the place of their retirement for the purpose, and give its name to their merchandize, which is sold under the appellation of Commercolly feathers. The tuft is easily extracted, and it sometimes happens that, when an adjutant, as the bird is com-

monly called, is caught upon some high terrace or roof-top, where the depredation cannot come under the surveillance of the authorities, he is robbed of the valuable appendage: it is only necessary to catch him by the feathers under the tail; the first struggle to be free, leaves them in the hand of the marauder. Excepting the heron's, there are no other Indian plumes so highly prized, and, as an article of commerce, the marabouts' are the most important.

In enumerating the amusements afforded by a jungle, that supplied by the monkeys must not be omitted. In topes where particular tribes have taken up their quarters, they are innumerable, and upon the least alarm keep up an incessant discord and chatter amidst the branches. The frolics and gambols of these animals, when viewed at a distance, are highly diverting; but it is by no means desirable to come into close contact with a troop, their fierceness being quite equal to their cunning; they have been known to attack a single huntsman, and so far get the better of him as to deprive him of his gun. Young men can scarcely withstand the temptation of having a pop at them, either to scare them from some act of depredation, or out of mere wantonness, and they are not slow to perceive

the cause of their alarm: after the first consternation, occasioned by the report of a fowling-piece, has subsided, they are apt to resent it upon the person of the offender. They will shake the boughs over his head, grin, and chatter through them, and a few of the most daring will beset the path; and, with some hundreds to back them, in the event of an assault, the battle is best avoided, since its issue would be rather doubtful. The extraordinary veneration with which the monkeys are regarded by the Hindoo natives of India, prevents the extirpation, which their exploits amongst the corn and other plantations seems to render necessary, as a measure of precaution. Monkeys, it is said, are not bad eating, and there appears to be a sufficient number to supply the bazaars of a district during a scarcity of grain.

There is no part of the world, perhaps, which produces game in greater plenty or diversity than Bengal. Besides fifteen species of deer, including the antelope, the roe-buck, the red-deer, the small moose-deer, the hog or bristled-deer, and the musk-deer, there are wild-hogs, hares, several kinds of common partridge; quails, which at a particular season have been compared to flying pats of butter; peacocks, ortolans, and black-partridge; wild-geese,

wild-ducks, teal, widgeon, water-hens, cranes, storks, and snipes of sundry shapes, colours, and sizes; the florikin, before-mentioned, though not in such abundance as the others, and the jungle-fowl. A great variety of fish is also supplied from the lakes, jheels, tanks, and nullahs: the latter are caught in large quantities, either with nets, or by a still more simple contrivance, that of placing large bundles of rushy bushes in the water over-night. Water-fowl are caught in Hindostan by people, who either wade or swim into the lakes with an earthen pot over their heads, or the artificial representation of a duck, made to fit on like a cap. Thus disguised, they are enabled to get so close to the objects of their pursuit as to pull them by their feet under water, and to deposit them in their game-bag: the manœuvre is effected by expert persons with very little disturbance to other flocks upon the lake, and so easily as to allow them to sell the produce of their day's sport at a very low price.

CHAPTER IX.

THE JUNGLES.

THE term jungle is very ill-understood by European readers, who generally associate it with uninhabited forests and almost impenetrable thickets; whereas all the desert and uncultivated parts of India, whether covered with wood or merely suffered to run waste, are styled jungles; and *jungle-wallah* is a term indiscriminately applied to a wild cat or to a gentleman who has been quartered for a considerable period in some desolate part of the country. Persons who are attached to very small stations in remote places, or who reside in solitary houses surrounded only by the habitations of the natives are said to be living in the jungles.

For a short period, a sojourn amidst the untamed wildernesses of Hindostan is very desirable, and with the exception of the fixed inhabitants of Calcutta, all persons visiting India must have had more or less experience of the delights of savage life in their passage through those un-reclaimed tracts which continually occur during a

long march. But though, perhaps, as much as may appear to be desirable may be seen in a journey of two or three months, it is necessary to occupy the same spot for a considerable length of time, in order thoroughly to understand the ways and modes of spending the day in the solitary districts of a foreign country; for, in constant movements through wilds, however monotonous, the incidents of the march and the change of scene afford a salutary relief to ennui, which is not to be found in a fixed residence. If our fellow-sojourners in the wilds do not happen to be congenial spirits, if the boar of the neighbouring *cate* (plantation) happen to be as agreeable a companion as the *bore* of the adjacent bungalow, the misnamed *society* of the place becomes an additional grievance.

There are perverse persons in the world who refuse to accommodate themselves to the circumstances in which they may be placed, and who, by carrying the formalities and observances of large communities into the jungles, effectually prevent the easy sociability which can alone render constant intercourse desirable. Where the circle is extremely circumscribed, the evil is without remedy; the efforts of one individual, or even of one family, must be unavailing, and the minority are con-

demned to lead the most irksome life imaginable, thrown entirely upon their own resources, and those resources miserably contracted by the peculiarities of the climate, and the difficulty of procuring the materials necessary to carry on any little ingenious art by which they may hope to beguile the time. To descend to particulars, we may imagine a small station (there are many such in India, though it would be invidious to name them), in which the number of Europeans does not amount to more than a dozen individuals; this station, at least a hundred miles from the head-quarters of the district, and the inhabitants depending entirely upon each other for society, with the exception of any chance traveller who may happen to pass through. Where the persons thus congregated together are of cheerful, obliging dispositions, ready to fall into any rational plan for the benefit and advantage of the whole, a residence in the jungles of India may be rendered exceedingly delightful; and those who have enjoyed its freedom from worldly cares and worldly vanities, its quiet sober existence, will look back upon it as the most enviable portion of their lives. Conversation will supply the place of books, and the few books which the station may boast will furnish topics for conversation, if those who are

fond of reading can be induced to enter into discussions upon what they read. When this is the case, the value of a book is enhanced to a degree scarcely conceivable to those who can command a well-furnished library at home: the commentaries elicited may not be very profound, but, if lively and entertaining, they form admirable substitutes for the Edinburgh and Quarterly, and where anything like talent is brought into play, the absence of many of those prejudices, which can scarcely fail to bias opinions concerning new works in the places of their production, renders decisions formed in the jungles of India more just and impartial than those which are so peremptorily pronounced by the leading reviews of the day.

The bachelors of a station usually bestow all their tediousness upon each other, and unless one should be more studious than the rest, whether their tempers and habits should assimilate or not, will be constantly together, frequently taking no sort of pleasure in that daily intercourse which they cannot live without. With the ladies it is different; they will not be at the trouble of leaving their houses except upon formal invitations, unless inclination should lead them into society; in this event neither rains nor hot winds can prevent them from traversing

the short distances which divide the bungalows from each other; and when kindness of heart or mutual tastes bring them into constant association, the gentlemen follow in their train, very few preferring the jovialities of their own exclusive circle to the attractiveness of a feminine coterie. The fruits of domestication amid the ladies, where the harmony is not interrupted by any mal-accident, are of incalculable value; so much, indeed, depends upon the wives and sisters of the residents, that there ought to be an Act of Parliament to prohibit the exportation of any lady, who is not qualified to lighten the dreariness of an Indian jungle.

It has been before remarked, that there is little scope for feminine industry in our eastern possessions. Charity bazaars, which put so many fair fingers into motion in Europe, are almost unknown out of Calcutta. Where there is no theatre, no fancy ball in perspective, requiring dresses and decorations to be fashioned out of such materials as only a bold and imaginative spirit would consider applicable, invention flags; people like to fancy that they are manufacturing something useful, and though nothing in India is unprofitable which affords employment for the fingers, preventing the miserable tedium resulting from utter inactivity of

body and mind, encouragement is necessary to induce perseverance; and it must be confessed that the gathering together of ladies, in the days of tapestry-hangings or of eleven-sided pincushions, has always tended to the production of a thousand stitches where one would suffice. The climate in India is unfortunately adverse to needle-work, or any work whose beauty may be endangered by hands which cannot be kept at a proper temperature: thread-netting, taking the precaution to use silver implements, is the employment best adapted to the hot weather, but the fair proportions of many a scarf have been curtailed by the want of a few reels of cotton. The natives twist all the thread they use as they need it from the raw material, division of labour being very ill-understood in Hindostan,—in consequence perhaps of the dearth of political economists,—and Calcutta does not always afford a supply of the precise article wanted to complete some delicate manufacture, which will not admit of any inferior substitute. European shopkeepers vary their prices so considerably, according to the demand, that prudent persons will not indulge in the purchase of goods charged so much beyond their value. The ladies at a jungle station were disappointed of a supply of glazed cotton, in con-

sequence of the enormous price put upon the stock which only one milliner in Calcutta happened to have on hand; six rupees (twelve shillings) per ounce was asked for what in England sold for half the number of pence; and the gentleman employed to execute the commission, struck with the magnitude of the sum, requested fresh instructions from his fair correspondents, who laid their work aside in despair. Thus, it appears that there are many temptations to idleness and few incitements to industry; and in nine cases out of ten, where the ladies of a station only meet upon ceremonious occasions, all the work, both useful and ornamental, will devolve upon the native tailor employed in the household.

It is difficult to say how the females of Anglo-Indian families, who are only visible upon great occasions, pass away their time. At large stations, it may be supposed that they are really not at home when such an announcement is made to the visitor; but in the jungles, where every movement must be known at the neighbouring bungalows, there is something mysterious in the seclusion of the lady of the house, and it is to be feared that she does not think her neighbours worthy the trouble of making herself visible: her dressing room forms an

impenetralia which is only to be guessed at. If country-born, or transplanted at a very early age, she perhaps finds more amusement in conversation with her native attendants than in that of Europeans of a higher grade of intellect. There are generally a few ladies at every European station addicted to this mode of thinking and acting; but in a large society their habits are of little consequence; it is only when a malign star condemns the members of some family, whose mental acquirements are of a superior order, to drag out two or three years of their existence in a jungle where there can be no reciprocity of sentiment between them and the inhabitants of the neighbouring houses, that the indulgence of idle and debasing habits can be felt as a grievance. But this is a conjuction which too frequently occurs, and, though quarrelling and ill-will may be avoided, the intercourse which takes place is constrained and heartless.

The observation of the same hours is absolutely essential to the comfort and sociability of a small station, and where the majority of the inhabitants persist in dining at night, as it is called, it is impossible to establish a free and friendly intercourse. In the first place, this custom involves the neces-

sity of entertaining dinner company, or not receiving any company at all. You cannot dismiss your guests before dinner, and there is no time to see them afterwards. In these days of reduction and retrenchment, there are not many of the servants of the Company who can afford to give frequent invitations to dinner, particularly in the Upper Provinces, where the European supplies for the table are so expensive, that beer and wine are luxuries which prudent subaltern officers deny themselves. Where people of limited incomes do not choose to meet at tea and spend the evening cheerfully together, invitations must necessarily be restricted, and can only occur at long intervals. These station-dinners, as they are called, which in large cantonments are only given by persons who can afford them, and in extensive societies bring people agreeably together, are the dullest things imaginable when composed of some eight or ten individuals, who have nothing on earth to say to each other when they meet.

The family of the commandant of a small station, who were willing to promote sociability in any form that would be most acceptable to the circle around them, having failed in an attempt to introduce early dinners and evening parties, were content sometimes to put off their own repast for

the convenience of their guests, and to see company occasionally after the most approved fashion.' The sacrifice of domestic comfort upon these occasions was very great indeed; the disarrangement of household economy formed but a small part of it, as it was merely necessary to substitute an early tiffin for the four o'clock dinner; but in incurring a certain expense, there was no commensurate gain in the solace of a dull and tedious day, to be got through, as usual, without exterior assistance. There is nothing so fatiguing as *ennui*; at nightfall, it would have been much more agreeable to prepare for bed than to sit upon the *chubootur*, or terrace, in expectation of guests, from whose conversational powers little pleasure could be anticipated; and frequent repetition had diminished the amusement at first derived from the great absurdity of making a formal and state affair of a meeting between persons located in the same wilderness, and whose happiness might have been so much increased by a more rational method of spending their time. At the hour prescribed by a goddess destined to reign supreme amidst the untamed savages, the wolves and hyænas of an Indian plain, these votaries of fashion began to arrive; carriage after carriage

drove up to the door, until the whole council of ten were fairly set down from their respective vehicles; the ladies dressed in ball attire, and the gentlemen uncomfortable in the prospect of being obliged to sit with their feet *under* instead of *on* the table, without their due allowance of cigars. To inordinate self-indulgence at home might be traced the difficulties of getting the station together in a sociable and friendly way; the decencies of life had become irksome to persons who were in the habit of lounging about their houses in deshabille; and this slatternly luxury could only be relinquished for something in the style of those great entertainments, which seemed to them to be alone worthy of any sacrifice of personal comfort. The dinner of course was dull, the conversation confined to those common-place topics which may be made agreeable in a family party, but which offer lenten entertainment to a formal circle. After a few hours, wasted in vain attempts to amuse people who belong to the most difficult class in the world, a sort of universal joy takes place at the separation; the guests are glad to go, the hosts are glad to see them depart; they have been defrauded of a comfortable sleep; they rejoice that a disagreeable

duty has been performed, and that a considerable period will elapse before they shall think themselves called upon to perform it again.

The peaceably inclined console themselves with the idea that it is far better to vegetate in this way than to live in a state of warfare; but there is generally at least one person in the community who thinks otherwise, and who, for the sake of a little variety, contrives to pick a quarrel with his neighbours—no difficult matter, where there is a disinclination to conform to the wishes of others. Indeed, it requires no inconsiderable portion of good sense and good temper to avoid giving offence to persons who expect a great deal and concede nothing; although they may refuse to lend themselves to any scheme proposed by the more active and social spirits, they are highly indignant when they are left out of such amusements as the place may afford. Should any strangers pass through, though they would never think of inviting them to their own houses, they take it much amiss if they should not be asked to meet them at the more hospitable mansions; they have no idea of being made conveniences of—sent for when there is nobody else; and to be asked in the evening, when there is a dinner party, is an indignity to which

they will not submit. In fact, such is the high tone of society in India, that no consideration of small rooms and limited space would excuse those who, in the attempt to bring a large party together, should ask a certain portion to join it after dinner; it is a thing not to be thought of.

Twenty persons formed the utmost number which could be accommodated at table in the bungalow before-mentioned, as the grand theatre of the station-dinners at a remote jungle. A regiment passing through, the family were anxious to invite all the strangers as well as the individuals composing their own circle, but it could not be accomplished; not a soul would condescend to come to tea; it was therefore necessary to make a selection: the married people were asked, and the young men were left to their tents. There was no use in giving them the option of coming in the evening, they would have been offended by so great a mark of disrespect as the supposition that they could be induced to act in a manner so derogatory to their dignity.

This spirit pervades every part of India; in Calcutta, the seats at a dinner party, vacated by any unforeseen contingence, cannot be filled up; intimate acquaintance, who would readily come in a friendly way at a day's notice, will not submit to

stop a gap after invitations to others have been sent out; where the party, not intended to be a large one, has been diminished by disappointments, the evil becomes very serious; upon such occasions, illnesses or deaths assume the character of affronts, for the guests who fulfil their engagements are, in nine cases out of ten, annoyed at having so few persons to meet them, and receive the apologies of the master and mistress of the house with ill-concealed resentment. The Medes and the Persians appear to have given the laws to Anglo-Indians; no innovation can be tolerated, and young men, who in England would feel honoured by being invited to attend the ladies in the drawing-room, must in India be treated with all the respect and consideration due to age and rank; they are offended by any distinction, and the ensign, if invited at all, must be invited with the same form and ceremony observed towards his colonel.

At the period of the relief, even the jungles participate in the amusements which the cold season produces all over India; they are seldom or never entirely out of the line of march, and the influx of strangers, although only for a couple of days, affords an agreeable variety to those who are happy to avail themselves of the change. Chance

travellers pass through occasionally, even at the most hostile period of the year; but in the cold weather, pleasing expectations may be entertained of the arrival of guests, bringing with them the news and fashions of more frequented places. The appearance of a tent is always signified by the servants of a family known to delight in the performance of the duties of hospitality. If double-poled, the inhabitant must be a person of some rank; his name and quality are speedily discovered; and, in nineteen cases out of twenty, this revelation brings with it a tolerably accurate knowledge of the disposition and character.

People in India are well known by report throughout the whole of the Presidency to which they may be attached, and there are few whose acquaintance is so little desirable as to exclude them from the houses of social individuals condemned to solitude during a considerable period of the year. Where persons of congenial dispositions meet in this manner, the accidental collision leads to valuable friendships. A well-informed, well-educated civilian, travelling with two or three chests of books, by way of beguiling time, in a lonely journey, proved to be a prize of the first magnitude; the day was spent in lively discussion;

an interchange of volumes took place, and as the residence of the owner of an extensive library was *only* at the distance of three days' march, a prospect was opened of the most cheering kind, since the assistance of a *cooly* could at any time procure a fresh supply of standard works from the well-filled shelves of this accommodating *neighbour*. The inhabitants of the station had been accustomed to send to a miserable circulating library, about a hundred miles off, for the "last new work by the author of Waverley," and were often fain to be content with the refuse of the Minerva press: happy were they, when the unconscious messenger deposited at their feet the lucubrations of some popular writer!

The exquisite delight of reading a book really worth reading in an Indian jungle is almost worth a journey to the wilds of Hindostan, especially if it should arrive upon one of those sultry, oppressive days, in which the hot wind blows from a wrong quarter; when weariness and listlessness prevail, and each member of the family, stretched at length upon a sofa, can cherish no hope of entertainment beyond that afforded by a reverie, in which he may transport himself to more genial skies. The dreary monotony of time passed in this manner is some-

times broken in upon by the unexpected arrival of a *dāk* traveller, who makes his appearance without the note of preparation sounded by blows upon the tent-pins. A palanquin is seen making its way through the dust; the soiled, travel-stained, weary look of the bearers, the baggage, and utensils heaped on the top of the vehicle, announce that it belongs to a wayfarer, and presently it is deposited at the door. The servants in waiting rush in with the intelligence that there is a strange gentleman outside; the master of the house, who is of course sitting without his jacket, makes a hasty toilette, and advances to receive his guest, who enters sometimes more than half-dead, red and roasted, by long exposure to hot air, cramped with lying for so many hours in a palanquin, and so completely covered with dust that it is difficult to determine what has been the original hue and texture of his garments. He is ushered, in the first instance, to the bathing-room, where a plentiful ablution, change of clothes, and a glass of brandy and water enable him to shake off his fatigue and join the family circle. The transition from a hot, jolting conveyance—a moving dungeon—to a spacious and comparatively cool apartment, is the most enjoyable thing in the world; the miseries of the past are

forgotten, and the lately subdued and jaded traveller soon becomes sufficiently recovered to impart as much pleasure as he receives. A renewal of the journey in the cool of the evening is anticipated without dread: it is only when the great distance from station to station obliges a European to travel through the heat of the day, that much difficulty and annoyance must be endured.

The natives, Hindoos in particular, choose the most oppressive season for long journeys, which they frequently perform in the hottest hours of the four-and-twenty. Marriage-processions are then to be seen traversing the roads in great abundance, and where a *bungalow* commands a view of the highway, a good deal of amusement may be derived from the fantastic pomp exhibited upon these occasions. The poorest make a faint attempt at magnificence; but their humble bridals are distinguished only by yellow garments and blaring trumpets; neither noise nor turmeric is wanting, and the eyes are dazzled and the ears split as the revel rout pass along. Camels, horses, palanquins, and *rhuts*, more or less ornamented, accompany the march of the wealthy suitor; but it is only in the marriage-retinue of a great man that there is much display of wealth and grandeur. The wedding, or rather the

betrothment of a son of a rich noble (for the bridegroom was a child of eight or ten years old), celebrated with all the pomp and splendour which the rank and fortune of the parties could command, afforded an agreeable spectacle to the dullest of dull cantonments. The natives affect a great deal of state; and make as much show as possible with the means which they possess; accordingly, the line of march was stretched out to its utmost length. A small troop of camels, jingling all over with bells, and richly bedizened with tufts of various colours, led the van; behind them came bullock-carriages, covered with scarlet cloth; then a company of grave personages mounted on tattoos; next, two or three open palanquins, canopied with fringed curtains, in one of which the little bridegroom gleamed and glittered like a rich ornament in a velvet casket. After these, a stately elephant appeared, bearing a silver *howdah*, screened from the sun by an umbrella of all the colours of the rainbow; this was followed by a disorderly troop of *suwars* or soldiers, ill-clad and ill-mounted, and trailing clumsy uncouth matchlocks and harquebusses along; more camels, more bullock-carts, more servants, on horseback and on foot, armed and unarmed, some carrying spears and bucklers,

and some blowing trumpets; more elephants marching singly, at a great distance from each other; more palanquins, some shut, some open, and all decorated with gold and silver; and, to crown all, an old-fashioned English gig, with a nondescript kind of harness and a horse of the alligator species, wherein two men in flowing green robes and white turbans were seated, with strange incongruity, found a place amid a procession in which all else was truly Asiatic.

In gazing upon a spectacle of this nature, Europeans are often startled by the apparition of an old coach, which looks as if it had been taken off one of the stands of London, with a native head proudly stuck out of the worm-eaten, rat-eaten, worn-out rusty vehicle, to which neither paint nor varnish have been applied for many a long year. Highly delighted with a *bellatee garree* (European carriage), they never trouble themselves about the manner in which it may be kept; and, as long as it will hang together, however tatterdemallion may be its condition, exhibit it on state occasions with undisguised exultation.

The bringing home of the young bride, after the betrothment had taken place, was rendered more picturesque by the passage through the can-

tonments being performed at night. The bells of the camels and elephants announced the approach of the cavalcade, and it certainly made a very splendid appearance by the light of innumerable torches. The palanquins glanced along like gorgeous birds, the fluttering of the fringed curtains being alone distinguishable; the camels assumed somewhat of a supernatural appearance, as their nodding plumes, arched necks, and shapeless humps appeared and disappeared in the flickering glare; the elephants looked like moving monuments of black marble, and strange monsters—flying griffins—and chimeras dire—might be dimly shaped out amid the promiscuous multitude of horse and foot, which spread themselves over the broad road; while the wild discord of the music, and the shout and cry always an accompaniment of an Asiatic procession, joined to the partial illumination of flaming torches, gave to the whole an air of mystery and romance, and no fanciful imagination could forbear associating the rajah, despite his attendant in the gig, with some potent magician, summoning good and evil genii to his aid, in protecting or kidnapping the hopeful heir of a neighbouring monarch. In beholding these strange pageants, the wonders of an Arabian tale become realities; we are no longer

surprised at the wild phantasies of the authors; they may justly be said to draw from nature, and to present to their readers, if not existing objects, things as they appeared in the chaotic confusion of men and animals crowding together at night. In driving home from late parties, in the Upper Provinces, Europeans frequently encounter strange groups of very unearthly character; incantation scenes, which would make the fortune of a manager of a minor theatre, and solitary individuals so withered and so wild in their attire as to be absolutely startling. Three or four demoniac-looking personages, of a horrid blackness, half-clad in uncouth garments, will suddenly emerge from some ravine, brandishing flaring torches, and making the air ring with discordant cries, and the clang of still more fearful instruments. They seem as if they were that instant disgorged from the subterranean dominions of some mighty magician; and it is only by an effort of reason that the mind can be divested of the idea that these masqueraders actually belong to the invisible world. The performers are usually Hindoos engaged in religious ceremonies, and they certainly contrive to equal in horror the most frightful descriptions of the writers of fiction. A disguise of this kind is sometimes assumed to cover

desperate undertakings, and even bridal processions are made subservient to the designs of robbers.

The treasure collected by officers employed in the revenue branch of the service, is frequently the object of hostile attempts. It is always conveyed to a place of security under a guard of sepoys, and the officer commanding takes care to encamp in some strong secure place, at a considerable distance from a town or village, and where the approach of a band of marauders may be easily descried. But, on one occasion, the robbers practised a *ruse de guerre*, which proved eminently successful; they clothed themselves in yellow garments, and, crowding together in the promiscuous throngs which are commonly assembled in nuptial cavalcades, effectually deceived the sentinels, who, looking upon them as the guests of some gay wedding, did not discover their real intentions until they were surrounded, and resistance was rendered hopeless.

The inhabitants of a jungle-station frequently, during the cold weather, betake themselves to canvas, and change the scene a little by forming hunting and shooting parties in the most picturesque spots in the district. The ladies are usually included in these engagements, and when there is any

congeniality of disposition, a few days or weeks may be passed very delightfully in the wildest solitudes. Elephants are too expensive animals to be generally maintained by private individuals belonging to the Anglo-Indian community; but as they are indispensable in attacking the highest species of game, they are borrowed for the time from the commissariat, or from rich natives, who are always willing to lend them, or to assist in any sport which may require the aid of those animals, which they delight to train for the field. Though hawks are frequently kept by Europeans stationed in the Upper Provinces of Hindostan, they are seldom so numerous or so well taught as those belonging to native gentlemen, Hindoos especially, who, if they should be strict in their religious principles, cannot enjoy the pleasures of the chase, unless their falcons are so admirably broken in as to take the prey alive. Notwithstanding their scruples respecting the destruction of animal life, they do not object to be present at the slaughter of a hecatomb of victims. On one occasion, though no Hindoo could be found to cut the throat of a partridge captured by a hawk, and to whom a libation of blood was to be offered, a Brahmin, acting in the capacity of a chuprassee, readily relinquished

his sword to a Moosulman for the purpose. Hawking in India, to those who are not bent upon the extermination of beasts of prey, is one of the most exhilarating things in the world, and the sport is peculiarly suited to feminine participation. To ladies, hog-hunting is of course quite out of the question, and there are very few whose nerves could stand against the terror and carnage of an expedition against tigers, to say nothing of the fatigue to be encountered in a chase which frequently lasts for hours under a burning sun. Hawking, where there is less excitement, may be relinquished at pleasure, and the pursuit of game leads the party into wildernesses far removed from the dwellings of man. The sylvan denizens of the soil are seen in their native haunts; the majestic nylghâu, roused at the approach of intruders, scours across the plain, or crashes through the boughs of a neighbouring thicket; herds of antelopes are seen grazing, and at every step the elephant puts up some beautiful bird or some strange and interesting animal; wolves and bears may be detected stealing off to a more secluded covert, whilst the porcupine utters its shrill cry of alarm, and the monkey gibbers at the passing pageant.

Wild geese afford the best sport; they soar ex-

ceedingly high, and frequently bid defiance to the falcon's adventurous wings. Smaller birds, partridges especially, have no chance of escape, and when appearing on the edge of those basin-like valleys, which so frequently diversify the plains of India, their capture is seen to great advantage from the back of an elephant, as the spectator can look down upon the whole scene; and following the flight of the hawk along the steep, where the frightened partridge hurries for shelter, observe the fatal precision of his aim, and see him pounce directly on the victim, which he bears to the falconer in his claw. In some parts of the country, the largest description of the hawk is trained to the chase, and its murderous talons are directed against antelopes and the smaller kinds of deer; it darts at the head of the quarry, blinds and confuses it with its flapping wings, tears it with its beak and claws, and finally succeeds in depriving it of life. This is not, however, a common exhibition, and is seldom witnessed except at the courts of native princes. Hunting with *cheetahs* (leopards) is more commonly practised; but though the manœuvres of the cat-like pursuer are exceedingly curious and interesting, as they develop the nature and habits of the animal, there is nothing

noble, generous, or exciting in the sport. The *cheetahs*, hooded like hawks, are secured by a slight harness to a platform fastened on a bullock-cart; their keeper holds the beasts in his hand, and those who wish to obtain a good view of the chase, take a seat beside the driver. Antelopes, accustomed to the sight of bullocks, will permit them to make a much nearer approach than any less familiar animal. When the carts have arrived at a prudent distance from the herd, the driver halts, the *cheetahs* are unloosed, and espying the prey, they drop silently off the vehicle, taking care to choose the contrary side from that on which the deer are feeding. They steal, crouching along the ground, screening themselves behind every bush, hillock, or tuft of grass which may occur in their way, pausing occasionally when there seems to be any danger of a premature alarm; each has singled out his victim, and measuring the distance with an experienced eye, they dart forward with a sudden bound. Two or three springs ensure success or disappointment; the victor alights upon his prey. But if a threatened antelope should have the good fortune to escape the first attempt, no second effort is made; the *cheetah* returns growling and in ill-humour to his keeper; he has lost his advantage,

and sullenly relinquishes a field which must be won fairly by strength and speed.

The poorer class of natives, who take up the occupation of hunters for their own subsistence, or pecuniary emolument, sometimes avail themselves of the services of a bullock in approaching within shot of a herd of antelopes. Theirs is a matter of business, not of excitement, and they have no idea of allowing a chance to the objects of their pursuit. A bullock is carefully trained for the purpose, and when his education is completed, he makes a quiet entrance into the jungles, followed closely by his master, who contrives to screen himself completely behind the animal. The bullock grazes carelessly as he advances, making circuitous and apparently unpremeditated movements; at last he arrives at a convenient distance without having disturbed the unconscious herd; he then stands still, the *shikaree*, or hunter, fixes his clumsy matchlock along the back of the animal, and still unseen takes unerring aim: down drops the devoted antelope, and away fly the rest of the herd, dispersed and out of sight in an instant. Europeans rarely witness this kind of sport, if such it may be called; but it sometimes falls to the lot of a solitary traveller, who from some elevation obtains an extensive view over a

wide plain, to have an opportunity of watching the singular manœuvres employed by the hunter and his uncouth agent.

Where the weapons at hand are inefficient for open warfare, stratagems must supply the place of more generous hostility; and even Anglo-Indians are sometimes compelled to adopt native arts, and when the assistance of elephants cannot be procured, they will condescend to lay a bait for a tiger, and sit patiently in a tree until the fierce animal shall repair to his evening repast, and they can shoot him while, in fancied security, he is indulging his appetite; others, disdaining such unwarlike defences, will encounter a tiger singly on horseback. This is of course a very difficult and dangerous enterprise; few steeds, however noble, can be brought to face an enemy of which they entertain an instinctive dread. The vicinity of a tiger is often discovered by the distress and terror exhibited by horses, which even in their stables have been known to fall into fits of trembling and perspiration, occasioned by their secret conviction that their foe is at hand; and when a horse is found sufficiently courageous to encounter so terrible a savage, the most extraordinary activity, coolness, presence of mind, accuracy of eye and strength of

arm, are necessary to ensure the victory. The hunter, after putting up the tiger, wheels round him in a circle at full speed, never permitting, in the rapidity of his movements, a single moment for the fatal spring; and when the tiger, bewildered and dazzled, offers an unguarded front, pins him to earth with the thrust of a spear. Such enterprises must be of rare occurrence, and can only be contemplated by adventurous spirits delighting in the excitement produced by the wild and dangerous sports of India, and anxiously bent upon braving the most fearful terrors of the field.

A long residence in the Upper Provinces is extremely favourable to pursuits of this nature; during protracted intervals of peace, active minds are driven to difficult and perilous exploits for the employment of their vacant hours; inured to desperate hazards, should any real emergence call for their services, they face grim-visaged war with stern delight; and though the scene is too distant, and the campaigns too unimportant to Europe, to attract much attention at home, the dangers dared and the deeds which are done by the gallant youth of our Eastern army, are not inferior to the most spirit-stirring enterprises chronicled in the records of chivalry. Where there are no wild beasts to be encountered,

fatigues and hardships of another kind are eagerly sought out. To ride easily and without stopping, that hard-trotting beast, an express-camel, becomes an object of ambition.

During the Mahratta war, one or two corps of dromedaries were formed; two men, completely armed, were mounted on each animal, but though traversing the country in an incredibly short period of time, these troops were unserviceable, in consequence of the exhaustion of the soldiers, occasioned by the dreadful jolting of their mode of conveyance. Some European officers, however, will ride these camels at their swiftest pace: thus qualifying themselves for the conveyance of orders or despatches, should their services ever be required in that way. Meanwhile, it affords an agreeable diversion to beguile time destined to be spent in almost interminable sands; and should duty or pleasure call them to less remote stations, they astonish the fastidious and refined society there, by bringing to it habits and manners contracted in lonely and sequestered places. An European officer, mounted on a camel, is a strange sight on the British side of the central provinces of India, and inevitably procures for him the appellation of *jungle-wallah*. Others exhibit themselves with their hair cut so

closely to their sculls, for coolness, as to look exactly as if they had just escaped from a mad-house; some people ask who the gentleman is without a *chopper*, a witticism which can only be understood by those who are versed in the architecture of country-boats and bungalows, of which the thatched roofs are denominated *choppers*.

In the midland stations of Hindostan, a great deal of amusement may be derived from the varieties of costume and manners displayed by arrivals from Europe and Calcutta, and those from the frontier towards the Himalaya, or the deserts of Nusseerabad. Where two ladies are dancing *vis-à-vis* in the same quadrille, there will be a difference of at least ten yards in the skirts of their gowns, the one expanding in the amplitude prescribed by a London or Parisian *modiste*, the other cramped in the narrow dimensions which obtained at the period of her outfit, some ten years before. A few of the wardrobes of India are actual curiosities, presenting modes and manufactures now unhappily lost to the fashionable world. The writer admits with shame that her attention was once distracted from a sermon, by the contemplation of a most remarkable fabric of cambric muslin, interwoven with a sort of lace-work, the like of which her eyes

had never till that hour beheld; at another time the vision of a brown muslin spotted with gold absorbed every faculty and arrested a due reply to the *burra beebee*, who had rescued this antiquated piece of raiment from the depths of some neglected wardrobe, apparently unconscious of the extraordinary sensation it would create. The gentlemen are not a whit behind the ladies: some of them affect the Asiatic style of dress, and wear long beards; elderly civilians have their clothes made by native *dirzees*, after the patterns which they brought out with them, and the most eccentric coverings for the head are adopted, hats of straw or of white cotton, and foraging-caps of every description: the newly-arrived dandy gazes with horror and surprise; but his gay apparel soon loses its gloss; he finds it convenient to change his cloth coat for one made of shining China silk; the dresses of the visitors from the jungles are re-modelled, and thus an equilibrium is preserved, and people in remote districts become enlightened on the subject of modern inventions.

CHAPTER X.

AGRA.

In this age of tourists, it is rather extraordinary that the travelling mania should not extend to the possessions of the British Government in India; and that so few persons are induced to visit scenes and countries in the East, embellished with the most gorgeous productions of nature and of art. The city of Agra is well worthy of a pilgrimage from the uttermost parts of the globe: yet a very small number amid those who have spent many years in Hindostan are tempted to pay it a visit; and the civil and military residents, together with casual travellers passing through to the places of their destination, alone, are acquainted with a city boasting all the oriental magnificence which imagination has pictured from the glowing descriptions of eastern tales. The Smelfungus tribe is very numerous in India; necessity, and not "a truant disposition," has occasioned the greater portion of the servants of the Company to traverse foreign

lands; and the sole remark frequently made by persons who have sojourned amid the marble temples and citron groves of Agra, consists of a simple statement, that "it is exceedingly hot." Bishop Heber, who possessed a true relish for the sublime and beautiful, and who delighted with all a poet's enthusiasm in the picturesque, has not done Agra justice in his interesting narrative. He was ill during the brief period of his sojourn there, and had come immediately from Delhi, the stately rival of the city of Acbar. This is the more unfortunate, as his work, being very popular, and considered good authority, has led a favourite writer of the day to portray ruin and desolation as the prominent features of Agra; whereas, though somewhat shorn of the splendour it possessed in the times of the Moghul emperors, it is still a place of wealth and importance, inhabited by rich natives, both Moosulman and Hindoo, and carrying on an extensive trade. Should steam-navigation ever be introduced with effect upon the Ganges and Jumna, there can be little doubt that the seat of government will be, at some time, removed from Calcutta to a more central station, and the probabilities are greatly in favour of Agra being the selected spot. In this event, improvements of vast magnitude may

be expected to take place in the upper country. The hill-stations especially will be benefited by the influx of visitors; they must necessarily be enlarged; roads must be made, bridges constructed, gardens cultivated, and public buildings erected, until they will offer the accommodations of European watering-places, in addition to the far superior attractions of their scenery. Persons weary of Cheltenham, Baden, Spa, and other springs of fashionable resort, may take a trip to the Himalaya, and visit the source of the Ganges by way of variety. Even now, it would be perfectly practicable for a tourist, in search of novelty, to climb the heights of the Asiatic mountains to the limits of eternal snow, that untrodden barrier which has defied, and will defy, the adventurous foot of man, and return to England, without experiencing a single day in which the thermometer shall have risen beyond the bounds of moderate heat. By landing in Calcutta in the middle of October, four months of cold weather is secured, a period sufficient to admit of easy travelling through the Upper Provinces, *viâ* Benares, Lucknow, Agra, Bhurtpore, Delhi, and Meerut; from the latter station it is only a few marches, or a three days' journey by *dák* (post), to Landour, a sanatarium perched

upon the crags of the Himalaya. This place, and Mussooree, another hill-cantonment, should form the head-quarters during the eight months of heat endured in the plains; and in the following October, passing through the central provinces, and visiting Jyepore, Nusseerabad, Ajmere, and Mhow, the tourist may proceed to Bombay, and take his passage home before the commencement of the hot weather.

To a lover of the picturesque, Agra is one of the most delightful stations in India; but as persons of this description form a very small portion of the community, a residence amid the splendid monuments of Moghul power is not considered desirable, in consequence of the alleged heat of the climate, and the high prices demanded for the bungalows. It possesses a garrison, consisting of one European or King's corps, and three of Native Infantry, with their requisite staff, under the command of a brigadier. The military cantonments are the ugliest in India, being situated upon a wide bare plain, enlivened only by a few Parkinsonias,* trees which are too uniformly covered with yellow flowers to appear to advantage when not mingled

* So called from having been introduced into India from the Cape by Colonel Parkinson.

with others of more varied foliage. The Jumna is completely hid from view by intervening sand-banks, which also shut out the beauties of the Taaje Mahal, with the exception of its silvery dome; and the exteriors of the bungalows, with few exceptions, are hideous. They are usually built of brick, a material amply supplied by the ruins in the neighbourhood; the gateless, and sometimes fenceless compounds, have a desolate appearance; and a handsome church is the only redeeming feature in the scene. The houses, however, have good gardens, though the latter are not made ornamental to the landscape; and their interiors are remarkable for the elegance of the fitting-up. an abundance of marble furnishing chimney-pieces, cornices, and plasters of a very superior kind of chunam; and, instead of bare white-washed walls, the apartments are decorated with handsome mouldings and other architectural ornaments. The civil lines, at the distance of two miles, are much more beautifully situated, amidst well-wooded ravines, which, during the rainy season, are covered with a verdant carpet of green, and watered by numerous nullahs. The roads are excellent, and kept in the finest order by the labours of gangs of convicts who are employed upon the

public works of British India. Many of the houses belonging to the families of civilians are *puckha*, and built in the style of those of Calcutta; others assume a more fanciful aspect, the centre being composed of an abandoned mosque, or tomb, with wings spreading on either side.

The distance between the military and civil lines at Agra constitutes a very considerable obstacle to the social intercourse of the station: throughout India there exists a degree of jealousy on the part of the former, which renders them tenacious of appearing to shew too much deference to the superior wealth of the judges and collectors, whom they fancy must look down upon a poorer class. There are, of course, a few instances of civilians in high appointments, who hold themselves far above their less fortunate military compeers,—a set of persons who have obtained the cognomen of "Buhádur," a very significant phrase, borrowed from the title of honour bestowed by natives upon great men, or assumed by those who desire to give themselves consequence;—but, generally speaking, the civilians, being fewer in number, are glad to pay attention to all the military in the neighbourhood; and —at least during my residence at Agra—they made far less difficulty in coming over to the balls

in the cantonments than was raised by the families of officers, who frequently declined invitations to the civil lines on account of the distance, or because they would not receive civilities which they were unable to return. This sort of pride is very detrimental to the society of small communities; and at Agra it always appears to be in full operation, the station never having had a reputation for gaiety.

There are no subscription-balls at Agra, and dancing depends upon the hospitalities exercised by private individuals; a play is occasionally performed at the theatre, a building of no exterior beauty, and whose properties are of a very inferior order; and races have been established, which, however, bear no proportion to the celebrity acquired by those at Meerut and Ghazeepore.

It is in the city of Agra and its environs that intellectual persons must seek gratification. The Taaje Mahal is usually deemed the most attractive object, and, considered in its character of a mausoleum, it has not its equal in the world. The reader of Eastern romance may here realize his dreams of fairy land, and contemplate those wondrous scenes so faithfully delineated in the brilliant pages of the Arabian Nights. Imagine a wild plain, broken into deep sandy ravines, the picture

of rudeness and desolation, a tract as unpromising as that which Prince Ahmed traversed in search of his arrow. In the midst of this horrid wilderness, a palace of deep red stone, inlaid with white marble, and surmounted by domes and open cupolas, appears. It is ascended by flights of steps; in the centre is a large circular hall, with a domed roof, and a gallery running round, all in the most beautiful style of Oriental architecture. This is the gate of the Taaje Mahal, a building which, in any other place, would detain the visitant in rapture at the symmetry and grandeur of its proportions, and the exquisite elegance of the finishing; but the eyes have caught a glimpse of a delicious garden, and the splendours of this noble entrance are little regarded. At the end of a long avenue of graceful cypresses, whose rich foliage is beautifully mirrored in marble basins, fed with water from numerous sparkling fountains, the Taaje arises, gleaming like a fairy palace. It is wholly composed of polished marble of the whitest hue; and if there be any faults in the architecture, they are lost in the splendour of the material, which conveys the idea of something even more brilliant than marble, mother-o'-pearl, or glistening spar. No description can do justice to this shining edifice, which seems

rather to belong to the fanciful creations of a dream than to the sober realities of waking life—constructed of gathered moonbeams, or the lilies which spring in paradise. The mausoleum is placed upon a square platform of white marble, rising abruptly to the height of about twelve or fifteen feet, the steps being concealed, which is perhaps a blemish. The place of actual sepulture is a chamber within this platform; round it on three sides are suites of apartments, consisting of three rooms in each, all of white marble, having lattices of perforated marble for the free transmission of air, and opening to the garden. At each of the four corners of the platform, a lofty minaret* springs, and the centre is occupied by an octagonal building, crowned by a dome, surrounded by open cupolas of inferior height. Nothing can be more beautiful or more chaste: even the window-frames are composed of marble; and it would seem as if a part of Aladdin's palace had been secured from the general wreck, and placed in the orange groves of Agra. The plan of the building, which is purely Asiatic, is said to have been the design

* These minarets, though beautiful in themselves, have a formal appearance as they stand, and look too much like high and slender castles upon a gigantic chess-board.

of the founder, who placed the execution in the hands of foreigners of eminence. The interior is embellished with beautiful mosaics, in rich patterns of flowers, so delicately formed, that they look like embroidery upon white satin, thirty-five different specimens of cornelians being employed in a single leaf of a carnation; while agates, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and other precious materials, occur in profusion. The mausoleum, washed by the Jumna, looks out upon that bright and rapid river; and its gardens of many acres, planted with flowery forest trees, and interspersed with buildings and fountains, stretch to the banks of the stream. It is truly a place which a votary of Mohammed would form from his ideas of the paradise of the true-believer, haunted by beautiful birds of variegated plumage, and filled with blossoms of every scent and hue.

No lover of ancient or modern times ever testified more genuine attachment to the memory of the object of his affection, than that which is recorded by this enchanting edifice. It was erected under the auspices of the Emperor Shah Jehan, the son of Jehanguire and the father of Aurungzebe, who, however failing in his duty as a son, in his character of a husband and a father stands unrivalled.

When his beloved wife, Moom Taza Mhal, lay dying, in the passionate anguish of his heart he assured her, that as, while existing, she surpassed in loveliness and virtue all the women of her time, so after her decease she should possess a monument which should be unequalled in the world. He fulfilled his promise. It was his intention to have built a mausoleum of similar magnificence upon the opposite side of the river, for himself, and to have connected both by a marble bridge across the Jumna; but the troubles of his reign did not allow him to complete this superb design, and his bones repose beside those of the object dearest to him while on earth. To Shah Jehan's strong paternal affection we are indebted for our first settlement in Hindostan; he gave a grant of land in Bengal to an English physician travelling through Agra, as a token of his gratitude for the restoration of one of his daughters, whose malady was subdued by the stranger's skill and attention.

In wandering over the princely gardens of the Taaje Mahal, the monarch's virtues alone can be remembered, and it is with feelings of no common gratification that those who are not wholly engrossed by passing objects add a flower to the fresh coronals daily strewed upon the monarch's grave.

The natives of Agra are justly proud of the Taaja Mahal; they are pleased with the admiration manifested by strangers, and gratified by the care and attention bestowed to keep it in repair: upon Sunday evenings especially, crowds of Moosulmans of all descriptions, rich and poor, visit the gardens, and contribute not a little, by their picturesque groups, to the attraction of the scene.

At the distance of about a mile from the "palace-tomb," for that is the signification of its name, stands the fort of Agra, a place of great strength in former times, before the introduction of fire-arms. One side is defended by the river, the others are surrounded by high battlemented walls of red stone, furnished with turrets and loop-holes, and, in addition to several postern entrances, a most magnificent building, called the Delhi-gate. Perhaps Lord Byron himself, when he stood upon the Bridge of Sighs, his heart swelling with reminiscences of Othello, Shylock, and Pierre, scarcely experienced more overwhelming sensations than the humble writer of this paper, when gazing, for the first time, upon the golden crescent of the Moslems, blazing high in the fair blue heavens, from the topmost pinnacle of this splendid relique of their power and pride. The delights of my childhood rushed to my

soul; those magic tales, from which, rather than from the veritable pages of history, I had gathered my knowledge of eastern arts and arms, arose in all their original vividness. I felt that I was indeed in the land of genii, and that the gorgeous palaces, the flowery labyrinths, the orient gems, and glittering thrones so long classed with ideal splendours, were not the fictitious offspring of romance.

Europe does not possess a more interesting relique of the days of feudal glory than that afforded by the fort of Agra. The interior presents a succession of inclined planes, so constructed (the stones with which they are paved being cut into grooves) that horses, and even carriages may pass up and down. The illustrations of fortified places, in Froissart's Chronicle, offer an accurate representation of these ascents, where knights on horseback are depicted riding down a steep hill while descending from the walls.

The fort is of very considerable extent, and contains many objects of interest and curiosity. The Mootee Musjid, or pearl mosque, disputes the palm of beauty with the Taaje Mahal, and is by many persons preferred to that celebrated edifice. Neither drawing nor description can do it justice, for the purity of the material and the splendour of the

architecture defy the powers of the pencil and the pen. An oblong hall stretches its arcades along one side of a noble quadrangle, surrounded by richly sculptured cloisters, whence at intervals spring light and elegant cupolas, supported upon slender pillars. The whole is of polished white marble, carved even to the very slabs that compose the pavement; and when moonlight irradiates the scene, the effect is magical.

Acbar was the first of the Moghul emperors who, preferring Agra as a residence to its neighbour Delhi, embellished and beautified the city; his name, as the "mighty lord," is of course held in great reverence by the inhabitants, and his tomb, a gorgeous pyramidical structure, at about five miles distance, is scarcely less an object of admiration than the Taaje. The durbar, or hall of audience, a magnificent apartment, is converted into an arsenal; but the marble palace remains nearly in the same state in which it was left by the Jauts, when the city was taken by Lord Lake. After the beautiful buildings already mentioned, this palace, though very rich and splendid, has comparatively little to recommend it. If, however, wanting in the external attractions of its prouder rivals, it is not less interesting on account of the recollections attached

to it, having been the residence of some of the most celebrated conquerors of the East. It is pleasantly situated upon the banks of the Jumna, which its balconied chambers overlook. The hall, formerly ceiled with silver, is still a fine apartment; but the smaller suites of rooms, being more singular, are more interesting to a stranger. These are mostly of an octagonal form, leading out of each other, or connected by a smaller antichamber; they are composed of white marble, the walls, floors, and roofs being all of the same material, the former decorated with mosaics of flowers rudely executed in many-coloured agates and cornelians. The windows open upon narrow balconies, having very low parapet walls, which overhang the Jumna: the bosom of the river is gay with boats, and the opposite bank finely planted, and adorned with bright pavilions glancing from between the trees, or raised upon some jutting point of land. From these suites, flights of marble stairs lead to the roof, which is flat, and commands a still nobler view. The plan of the palace is very curious as seen from this elevation: with the exception of the range of buildings fronting the river, it is laid out in small quadrangles, each with its garden or its bath in the centre. One of these, destined for a retreat during

the hot winds, is particularly curious. It contains a square apartment of tolerable dimensions, unprovided with windows. The walls are lined with fantastic ornaments of spar, silver, and other glittering materials, intermixed with small oddly-shaped pieces of looking-glass; the pavement is cut into channels, for the purpose of allowing a perpetual flow of running water in the hot season. Here the emperors were wont to retire during the most sultry hours, substituting the glare of torches for the light of day, and admiring, doubtless, the barbaric splendour with which they were surrounded.

The palace of Agra has been frequently irradiated by the presence of the 'Light of the Harem,' the beautiful Nourmahal, one incident in whose eventful life has been immortalized by the pen of Mr. Moore. The marvellous adventures of her history might fill a volume. Shere Afkun, the husband who stood between her and a throne, was one of the paladins of Eastern chivalry, and the deeds imputed to him, by authentic records, are only to be paralleled in the pages of romance: he seems to have formed his character after that of Rustum Khan, or some other poetical hero equally celebrated. He is said to have rushed unarmed upon a lion, and quelled the monster single-handed; and

when, after a hundred victories in perilous adventures, in which his cruel master involved him, for the purpose of procuring his death: in a struggle with twelve assassins, he fell at last; he yielded rather to the determined hatred of the king than to the weapons of his murderers; throwing away a life embittered by ingratitude. Nourmahal, by her intrigues for her children's elevation, her caprice, and her revenge, endangered the sceptre of her imperial husband a thousand times, yet maintained her ascendancy over him to the latest period of life. Once he was wrought upon, by the representations of a faithful friend, to consent to her death, but could not refuse a farewell interview: the consequences were such as had been predicted; she regained her influence, and the realm was again distracted by civil dissension. Highly accomplished, according to the fashion of her country and the age in which she flourished, Nourmahal was indeed the 'light of the harem;' her inexhaustible fancy devised new schemes of pleasure for each day and hour, and in her seductive socity a luxurious monarch forgot his duties as well as his cares. Nourmahal can make no pretensions to excellence as a wife; for, if not consenting to the persecution of her first husband, she tacitly sanctioned his rival's

pretensions; while to her second she brought discord and ruin; but, as a parent and a child, she seems to have acted in an exemplary manner.

On the opposite bank of the Jumna, near the stately gardens of the Rambaugh, said to have been originally planted and laid out by Jehanghire, stands one of the most beautiful specimens of Oriental architecture which India can boast—the tomb of Utta ma Dowlah, the beloved father of the empress Nourmahal. Anxious to ensure its durability, she proposed to erect this monument of silver, as a less perishable material than stone; but some judicious friend assured her that marble would not be so liable to demolition, and accordingly, Time alone has injured a building which the Jauts were not tempted to plunder. It is lamentable that the British Government should have limited its expenditure to the repairs of the Taaje Mahal, and that so beautiful a gem of art should be suffered, for want of the necessary repairs, to fall into decay; its surrounding garden is now a wilderness, destitute of fences, and this exquisite monument is left to the care of a few poor natives, who lament over the neglect sustained by the great lord, once the pride and glory of the East. The attention paid to the dead, forms a beautiful

trait in the Moosulmaun character. Kingdoms have passed away, and dynasties have failed, and while nothing of the magnificence of the silent tenants of the tomb is left save the name, their graves are still honoured and respected, and flowers are strewed over them, and lamps are burned, by those who have long submitted to foreign dominion. Utta ma Dowlah's tomb is one of the most attractive spots in the immediate neighbourhood of Agra. It is within the compass of a morning or evening drive; and the gardens of the Rambaugh, in its close vicinity, are as splendid as those we read of in the Arabian tales. From the roof of this monument one of those views are obtained which, once seen, can never be forgotten. The blue waters of the Jumna wind through a rich champaign country, with gardens stretching down on either side to its rippling current; opposite, the city of Agra, with its bastioned fort, its marble palace, splendid cupolas, and broad ghauts, intermixed with trees, stands, in all the pomp of eastern architecture: below, in silvery pride, the lustrous Taaje Mahal is seen; and, far as the eye can reach, country houses, decorated with light pavilions springing close to the margin of the stream, diversify the landscape.

The tomb of Acbar, like that of Utta ma Dowlah, is falling into a state of dilapidation. Its splendid gate is threatening to fall, and the once luxuriant park is now wild and desolate. It is on the road to this celebrated mausoleum that the decay of Agra is most visible; at every step, we pass the remains of houses, which shew how far the city formerly extended. Secundra, a village in the close vicinity of Acbar's tomb, also has fallen from its high estate, and exhibits a succession of ruined buildings. Its name affords one of the numerous evidences of the fond belief entertained by the natives of Hindostan, that Alexander the Great crossed the Indus. As he could only have traversed India as its conqueror, it is extraordinary that they should cling so tenaciously to the idea; but numerous towns, which he is supposed either to have founded or visited, are named after him *Secundra*, and the people imagine that they possess his remains; a tomb at the summit of Secundermallee, a mountain in the Carnatic, being said to be that of Alexander. Probably the invasions of some of his successors may have led to the error: but it is one too strongly cherished to be abandoned, for all castes reverence his memory, and boast his exploits as if they had cause to be proud of both.

The mausoleum of Acbar is of a character admirably suited to the splendid barbarian to whom it is dedicated. It is more difficult to describe than the Taaje Mahal, to which, however, it does not bear the slightest resemblance. Superb colonnades of white marble sweep on either side a gigantic pyramid of red stone. Below, in a dark vault, illumined only by a single lamp, lies the body of Acbar; but each of many stories arising above contains a sarcophagus, placed over the spot where his remains are interred; and the lofty building terminates in a square roofless chamber of white marble, whose walls are perforated in exquisite patterns, and which enclose the last and the most beautiful of the marble coffins. Narrow flights of stairs lead to a terraced platform surrounding low corridors, and decorated at the angles with open cupolas faced with blue enamel and gold; a second flight leads to another platform of smaller dimensions, similarly embellished, and a third and a fourth story succeed. The view from each is magnificent, and the design, though certainly grotesque, is rendered majestic by the air of grandeur imparted by the immense size of the building. At Futtehpore Secri, and at Deeg, distant a few marches from the city of Agra, there are equally

splendid remains of Moslem glory. Bhurtpore also, the strong-hold of the Jauts, and Gwalior, a fort supposed to be impregnable until stormed and taken by a young British officer, the residence of Seindia, are within an easy journey; together with Muttra and Bindrabund, the seats of Hindoo superstition, which possess several extremely curious and ancient temples. The profusion of marble, with which Agra abounds, has been brought from Oodipore, and the adjoining district of Bundelkhund has furnished its more precious stones.

END OF VOL. II.

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